une 26, 1996

Egypt: Qadhafi flight a 'minor' violation

CAIRO (AFP) — A flight by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to Egypt last week was "not a major violation" of the air embargo on his country, an Egyptian Foreign Ministry official said Wednesday. "This violation was not such a major one because it took place in very particular and exceptional circumstances," Deputy Foreign Minister Qassem Al Masri told journalists. "We hope the members of the Security Council understand the situation," he said. Mr. Masri repeated Cairo's claim that it did not have time to notify the U.N. Sanctions Committee that Colonal Qadhafi intended to violate the air ban when he flew to Egypt Saturday to attend the two-day Arab summit there. Col. Qadhafi then flouted the ban again by flying back home on a Libyan jet, after being seen off at Cairo airport by Egypt's Prime Minister Kamal Al Ganzuri.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

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YOUR WINDOW ON THE WORLD

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19 Americans killed, scores injured in Al Khobar blast

Truck-bomb explodes at U.S. Air Force base; Clinton vows perpetrators will be punished

Combined agency dispatches

AL KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia — Nineteen Americans were killed and 386 other people were wounded when a truck-bomb gutted a building housing U.S military personnel at an air base in eastern Saudi Arabia, officials said Wednesday

Saudi television showed rescue workers digging through the rubble after the bomb exploded late Tuesday at the compound for U.S. Air Force personnel serving at the King Abdul Aziz Air Base in Al Khobar on the Gulf coast.

Saudi officials said 19 Americans were killed and 386 people wounded, among them Americans, Saudis and Bangladeshis.

The U.S. embassy confirmed the number of dead Americans, adding that another 80 were hospitalised, all of them air force personnel. About 150 other Americans were treated at the scene, it said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher broke off a Middle East tour and flew immediately to Saudi Arabia to prepare a report for U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Clinton said he was outraged by the bomb attack and would put the fight against terrorism on top of his agenda at the upcoming Group of Seven (G-7) summit in Lyons France.

"Now as I head to Lyon, my first order of business will be to focus the strength and the energy of the G-7 on the continuing fight against terrorism," Mr. Clinton told reporters outside the White House before leaving.

"We cannot have economic security in a global economy unless we can stand against these forces of terrorism," Mr. Clinton said. "The United States will lead the way and

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan condemns attack, reaffirms its solidarity with S. Arabia and Gulf

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday called King Fahd of Saudi Arabia to enquire about the situation following the carbomb blast in Khobar which killed at least 19 people and wounded nearly 400 others.

The King voiced his condemnation of the attack, stressing "Jordan's backing for Saudi Arabia in the face of all forms of terrorism and extremism and criminal actions."

He said that Jordan was keen on safeguarding the stability and security of Saudi Arabia and all the countries of the Gulf region. He expressed his deep condolences over the deaths caused by the bombing.

King Hussein also called Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz, the Saudi crown prince and deputy prime minister, condemn the explosion.

The King also expressed his sympathy to the relatives of the victims, stressing Jordan's continued stand by Saudi Arabia in the face of all forms of terrorism.

The King also sent a message of condolences to U.S. President Bill Clinton over the deaths of Americans in the attack.

"Jordan condemns terrorism and extremism in all their forms," the King said in his cable.

Earlier Wednesday Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti

(Continued on page 7)



A general view of the building housing U.S. troops in eastern Saudi Arabia after an explosion demolished its entire facade as shown on Saudi television on Wednesday (Reuters photo)

King Hussein calls on all parties to work together for peace and respect all accords

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday called on all parties involved in the Middle East peace process to work together for peace in the region and emphasised that all sides must remain committed to the agreements already signed and will be signed.

The King, who was addressing a batch of graduates from the Staff College, also reiterated that the Arab summit held in Cairo this week was a good beginning for more similar gatherings. He paid tribute to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's "sincere and good wishes" making the summit a success.

"Our participation in the summit was an embodiment of our conviction and our deep-rooted faith in the unity of the Arab nation, in the need to eliminate from it the causes of discord and the need to mobilise all efforts to propel our nation forward, to achieve complementarity among its people, to build the future that our people deserve, and to bring our nation to the status that befits its illustrious history and role in human civilisation," said the King.

Following are major excerpts from the address:

"Our position in this summit was, as it has always been, principled, clear and sincere. We stand for the unification of this nation and its positions on every crucial issue. We deal with all our brothers with purity and clarity, with open hearts and minds, and with a clear vision. We are careful not to interfere in the internal affairs of any brotherly country. When we express ourselves on an affair of a brotherly Arab country, we do so out of concern for this country, and in fulfilment of our duty towards its people, without any ulterior motive nor designs. Just as we do not allow ourselves to interfere in the internal affairs of others, we permit no one to interfere in our affairs, nor to cast doubt on the truth of our positions and our commitment to the Arab Nation, nor to make any attempt whatsoever against the security of this country.

"We stated at the summit that we stand for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace, based on the resolutions of international legitimacy, and the principle of

(Continued on page 7)

3 Israeli soldiers killed in W.Bank

Jordan: No evidence attackers infiltrated from here

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An official Jordanian statement released Wednesday said that there were no indications to suggest the armed group that killed three Israelis had infiltrated from Jordanian territories or had retreated to them.

Following yesterday morning's attack that left three Israeli soldiers dead and two others wounded, His Majesty King Hussein expressed his condolences to Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu.

The incident occurred at about 8 AM when an Israeli border patrol was ambushed by unidentified gunmen, reports from Israel said.

A senior Jordanian government official told the Jordan Times that details had yet to be confirmed and this would be achieved through a joint Jordan-Israel investigation already in progress.

Reports said a routine Israeli patrol vehicle was fired upon from "very close range by terrorists who apparently came from Jordan."

The attack is regarded as the worst armed incident along the border since Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty on October 26, 1994.

The official said: "We have yet to confirm the details of the incident and the parties behind it and we are conducting a joint investigation with the Israeli's in line with the Jordan-Israel peace treaty," the official said.

A clause in the peace treaty stipulates cooperation and coordination between the armed forces of the two parties to combat terrorism and infiltration attempts.

The official added: "We are unable to provide further information at this point and are awaiting the results of the investigation."

By press time there was uncertainty whether the infiltrators did in fact originate from Jordan. The French news agency AFP reported that the attack was claimed by a Damascus-based Palestinian group, Al Intifada, led by Abu Musa.

(Continued on page 7)

Christopher seeks to assure Mubarak, Arafat Netanyahu will respect all commitments

CAIRO (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher assured anxious Egyptian and Palestinian leaders on Wednesday that Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu understands his "obligations" under peace accords with the Arabs.

In back-to-back meetings with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, the American diplomat sought to maintain a calm atmosphere while the Clinton administration worked to get peace talks going again.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa insisted Israel had to negotiate under a "land for peace" arrangement, while Mr. Arafat demanded Israel adhere to "what has been agreed on and signed."

Mr. Mubarak met with Mr. Christopher separately for an hour, but did not talk to reporters or remain for the three-way meeting with Arafat.

Mr. Musa sat in for the Egyptian president. "We reaffirmed completely our commitment to the peace process, and we hope Israel will be committed also like us to the peace process," Mr. Arafat said after the meeting.

The Egyptian government press savaged Mr. Christopher on Wednesday morning for appearing to endorse Israel's attempt to wriggle out of the agreements behind Arab-Israeli talks.

In Israel, President Ezer Weizman said he was worried by the growing "anti-Israeli" sentiment in Egypt, which in 1979 became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel.

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns told reporters Mr. Christopher was trying to "enlist Egyptian support for continuing Arab negotiations with Israel."

In Israel on Tuesday, Mr. Christopher agreed with Mr. Netanyahu that such talks should be without preconditions — the diplomatic code

(Continued on page 7)

Papandreou is laid to rest with full honours

ATHENS (AFP) — Tens of thousands of mourners packed the streets of Athens Wednesday as Andreas Papandreou, founder of Greek socialism, was laid to rest in a state funeral blending solemn ceremony with an outpouring of national grief.

Mourners — less than expected because of the intense heat — came from all over Greece, by bus, train and boat, to pay their last respects to the former prime minister and accompany his body to Athens' central cemetery across from the Acropolis.

In ceremonies unmatched since the funeral of Greece's King Paul in 1963, the founder of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) was laid to rest beside his father George, a centrist prime minister after World War II.

Himself prime minister from 1981 until 1989 and again from 1993 until he was forced to resign in January because of failing health, Mr. Papandreou died Sunday of heart failure after a long illness. He was 77.

Emerging from a religous service in Athens' Orthodox Cathedral his distraught widow Dimitra collapsed sobbing on her late husband's coffin, showering his photograph with kisses.

Earlier, the 42-year-old former air hostess had been supported by a friend as she headed the funeral cortege behind the flag-drapped coffin of the late Greek leader, whose ex-wife Margaret followed two rows further back.

Dressed in black, their faces etched with grief, the two women sat in the same cathedral pew, separated only by the late premier's four children and half-brother.

The two women did not embrace and have not spoken to each other despite being thrown together following Mr. Papandreou's sudden death at the weekend. Mr. Papandreou married Dimitra, 35 years his junior, in 1989 after divorcing Margaret, whom he had wed in 1951.

Stifling heat of 37 degrees Celsius did not deter the crowds, which had begun gathering early in the morning outside the cathedral where Mr. Papandreou had lain in state since Sunday.

More were jammed along the route of the funeral cortege from the cathedral to Athens' historic cemetery.

Hebron mayor presses Israel on withdrawal

HEBRON (AFP) — Israel's new Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai visited Hebron Wednesday where the mayor urged him to implement a much-delayed troop pullback from the West Bank town.

"We asked him to carry out the redeployment from the town. He replied that his government was studying the issue," said Mayor Mustapha Natshe after talks with Mr. Mordechai at Israel's military headquarters in the town.

"A refusal to go ahead with redeployment would be a flagrant violation of the peace process. Nobody can predict how the inhabitants of Hebron would react in such a case," Mr. Natshe warned.

Hebron is the last major West Bank town still under Israeli occupation.

Italy prods Israel

Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini urged Israel Wednesday to take a bold initiative in relaunching Middle East peace talks given the moderate stance adopted by the Arab World during its recent summit in Cairo.

Mr. Dini said he was confident that "after the election statements, the peace process will move forward with all concerned parties."

He said he expected the new Israeli government to bow to reality and take into account, through bold unilateral action, the wishes of all those who want the dialogue to continue.

Mr. Dini stressed that Arab countries had, at the end of this week's Cairo summit, all reaffirmed their commitment to the peace process without hesitation or exception.

However, he said their undertaking included "a warning to Israel," with Arab countries threatening to revoke their policy of opening towards the Jewish state if the new Israeli government changes the basic terms of the negotiations.

That means, Mr. Dini added, questioning the principle of land-for-peace. He said the attitude of Arab countries showed that moderate elements continue to prevail, and that at the most, they are inhibiting the influence of militants. Mr. Dini, who is acting president of the EU council of foreign ministers, said the Florence summit declaration on the Middle East, issued Saturday, helped to set a moderate and constructive tone for the Arab summit.

Arab information ministers: Terrorism and stalemate in peace process threatens Mideast

CAIRO (AP) — Arab information ministers meeting in Cairo warned on Wednesday that terrorism and a stalemate in Arab-Israel peace talks are the two main threats to the Middle East's security and stability.

The warning came a day after a truck bomb tore through a U.S. Air force housing complex in Saudi Arabia, killing 23 Americans and wounding 270 others.

Several ministers condemned the bombing — including the minister from Syria, which Washington condemns as sponsor of terrorism. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat sent condolences to President Bill Clinton over the loss of American life.

The information ministers were meeting to establish a common strategy in response to the new hard-line Israeli government's views on negotiations. But the bombing in Saudi Arabia quickly cast its shadow over the discussions.

Egypt's information minister, Safwat Al Sherif, urged the others at the session to put terrorism on their countries' agenda and try to work out media strategy to combat political violence.

"Terrorism has no identity or nationality," he said. "It should be fought every where and by all means," he said.

The Arab media can play a major role in combating terrorism, said Mr. Sherif, whose country has faced a four-year battle with militants hoping to oust the secular government and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

Esmat Abdul Meguid, secretary-general of the Arab League, said that extremism and the lack of peace were all part of one package and represented the major threats to Mideast security.

"This is a crucial stage for a crucial era, starting from the phenomena of radicalism ... and ending with the obstacles faced by the peace process, a matter which creates more tensions and struggles in the area," he said.

He said the phenomenon of terrorism was alien to Arab societies.

Addressing the conference, Mr. Abdul Meguid said if Israel deviates from the peace process, it will force the Arabs to reconsider steps they have taken to broaden relationships with the Jewish state.

He echoed an Arab summit declaration Sunday, which was adopted after the government of Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu issued policies opposing returning the Golan Heights to Syria or accepting creation of a Palestinian state.

The Arabs consider such statements to violate the land-for-peace principle established as the basis for the negotiations when they started five years ago.

While several ministers condemned the bombing and expressed sympathy for Saudi Arabia, they did not mention the United States. But both the Iraqi and the Libyan ministers blamed Washington for U.N. embargoes on their countries and refrained from condemning the bomb attack.

Actress Irene Papas robbed in Naples

APLES, Italy (AFP) – eek actress Irene Papas is robbed of a $6,000 atch by a thief who atched it from her wrist she was walking with o friends in central Na-s, police said Monday. pas is currently appear- at the San Carlo Thea- in the city. The thef ok place Sunday and lice said the so-called olex Gang" had also olen four other valuable uches from Italian top ts in Naples over the eekend. Police said they ould ask Papas to try to entify the thief from pho graphs of people known specialise in snat acks.

Copperfield ready o work his magic in Hong Kong

ONG KONG (AFP) – agician David Copper ld, the man who walked rough the Great Wall of hina, says he has been ked to perform at new ar's celebrations for ong Kong's handover to hinese rule. The Ameri n, who is to perform in ong Kong this month as tight-lipped on what d made the offer, but is own to have got on well ith his Chinese hosts dur g a visit earlier this year have been approached t rform during the han over ceremony," Copper ld told reporters, withou aborating. A Hong Kong overnment official said ans for the ceremony r the British territory turn to Chinese rule dly 1 next year were the early stages. Ch d Britain have so en unable to agree on t of events, with the ma icking point being th le of Hong Kong Gover or Chris Patten, persona on grata to Beijing Co rfield is travelling wit s parents, but not gir iend and supermode laudia Schiffer. He wa milarly tightlipped on th aspect of a wedding.

Japan hosts symposium on bullying

OKYO (AFP) — Some 00 Japanese school teache s and education boar embers got together wit oreign experts here Mon y to discuss ways to lve a problem considered national urgency — nam nt bullying among chil en. The international mposium under the aus ces of the Japanese Edu ation Ministry opened th a report by Dan Ol eus from the University f Bergen in Norway who id many parents and tea ers failed to notice bully g at school. Experts from rtain, the Netherlands d Australia took part in e symposium. Bullying as become a serious prob m at Japanese schools ith some cases leading to icide.

China to show Toy Story

BEIJING (AFP) — The rst computer generated artoon feature film To tory is to be shown i hina next month, newspa ers reported Friday. It will e the second Disney lockbuster aimed at the oung Chinese audience ollowing the huge success f The Lion King in 1995. he dubbing and distribu on of the film will be han led by the Shanghai Film nd Television Group. To tory is one of a dozen fo ign films, mainly Amer an, which China has mported annually since 994. On Monday, in con luding a copyright agree ent with U.S negotiators hina agreed to impose ore American films and step up joint production ith Hollywood studios

U.N. secretary general appeals to Cypriots to break deadlock

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Secretary General Boutros Ghali appealed on Tuesday to the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to break a long-standing deadlock over the division of their island and work towards the resumption of talks.

"A lasting settlement will not be achieved unless the two leaders can persuade their communities that their interests will be better served by flexibility and compromise than by continuing confrontation," Dr. Ghali wrote in a report.

He called on Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, whom he met separately this month, to "break the present impasse and establish common ground on which direct negotiations can be resumed."

The United Nations has been trying for decades to reunite Cyprus under a federal system. A bi-communal government in Cyprus broke down in late 1963, barely three years after independence from Britain, resulting in the dispatch of U.N. peacekeepers who are still there.

The island was virtually partitioned after Turkish troops landed in the north in 1974 in reaction to a brief coup in Nicosia engineered by the junta then ruling Greece.

"The negotiations on Cyprus have been at an impasse for too long," Dr. Ghali said.

"Thirty two years after the first involvement of the United Nations in the Cyprus conflict and 22 years after the events of 1974, the international community can reasonably demand evidence that both parties, and others concerned, are serious in their pursuit of an overall settlement on the basis the two parties agreed almost 20 years ago," he wrote.

"The Security Council has repeatedly stated that the existing status quo is unacceptable. No one can objectively believe that it provides a viable basis for preserving the character and security of the two communities."

Dr. Ghali said the absence of progress was particularly disappointing when the elements needed for an overall solution had been identified in past agreements, Security Council resolutions and various ideas elaborated in the course of years of negotiations.

A decision by the European Union (EU) to begin talks in 1997 or 1998 on Cyprus' accession to the group was "an important new development which should facilitate an overall settlement," he added.

Alluding to the Turkish Cypriots' opposition to EU membership for Cyprus before the division of the island has been resolved, he said: "The European Commission's efforts to explain to the Turkish Cypriot community the benefits of EU membership and to allay its concerns are important in this regard. The imminence of the accession negotiations should also instill a new sense of urgency to the search for an overall agreement.

"What is now required is a concerted effort by the international community to build on these developments and give a new impetus to the negotiating process."

Declaring that Greece and Turkey had a special responsibility, Dr. Ghali said it was "crucial that they should not only lend their active support to the search for a settlement but also ensure that their own relations do not develop in a way that endangers that search" — a reference to disputes over islands in the Aegean and other issues that almost brought the two countries to blows earlier this year.

"But the main responsibility will continue to rest with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities," the secretary general stressed.



BASRA IS READY: The Iraqi port of Basra prepares to receive U.N. humanitarian supplies after a deal between Iraq and United Nations was reached on May 20. Baghdad will be allowed to sell $2 billion worth of oil to raise funds for food and medicine for civilians suffering under six yeas of trade sanctions (Reuters photo)

Ciller ponders coalition as power void drags on

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's pro-Islamic and secular conservative leaders maintained the suspense Wednesday over whether they could wind up two weeks of horse-trading and work out a power-sharing scheme.

Tansu Ciller, the former prime minister, was still undecided as to whether she should accept an offer by Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party which holds the largest number of seats in parliament, to join a coalition government, the media reported.

Mrs. Ciller, leader of the conservative True Path Party, was said to be insisting on a system of rotating premiership in which she would be first to occupy the post. Mr. Erbakan was arguing that, as leader of the largest party, he should take first turn, the press said.

On Tuesday, after her third meeting with Mr. Erbakan in a month and two weeks after he made his coalition offer, Ms. Ciller was said by the Islamic leader to be asking for more time to consult her party leadership.

Ms. Ciller has appeared to waver over the offer, concerned that a coalition with the pro-Islamic party could split her own party, which is committed to Turkey's 73-year tradition of secular rule.

According to the daily Milliyet, Mrs. Ciller told Mr. Erbakan that 53 True Path deputies were threatening to leave the party if she joined a coalition headed by him.

Observers believe the figure is exaggerated, though five of Mrs. Ciller's deputies have defected to Turkey's other right-wing party, the Motherland Party, in the past week, putting it now ahead of True Path at 131 seats against 129. Fifteen others have said they would oppose a True Path-Welfare coalition in a confidence vote. Some reports said Mrs. Ciller had renewed contacts with Mesut Yilmaz, outgoing prime minister and leader of the Motherland Party, with a view to re-forming a coalition, but commentators said this was unlikely given their bitter rivalry and the collapse of their earlier coalition after only three months in office.

Turkey has been in flux since December when the pro-Islamic party secured a surprise lead in general elections but failed to win enough parliamentary seats to form a government on its own.

Ms. Ciller, the first woman ever to govern Turkey, formed a coalition with Mr. Yilmaz but walked out of the alliance late last month.

Mr. Erbakan, who was charged with forming a government after Mr. Yilmaz resigned on June 6, needs a partner to give his government an absolute majority in parliament, as Welfare holds only 158 of the 550 seats.

France to aid Oufkir family refugees to stay

PARIS (AFP) — The French government will help three members of the family of late Moroccan Defence Minister General Mohamed Oufkir, who arrived here after a dramatic escape from their homeland, to stay on in France, the foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

Assistant spokesman Yves Doutriaux said France would try to help 34-year-old Maria Oufkir who arrived in Paris Tuesday from Madrid with her three-year-old adoptive son Michael and a cousin, Achoura Chenna.

The French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) said Wednesday that the three had not yet applied for political refugees' status. OFPRA said they could also apply for territorial asylum to the interior ministry.

Oufkir, regarded as King Hassan II's right-hand man, died in 1972 in mysterious circumstances following a failed coup against the monarch. His widow and their six children were held without charge or trial for nearly 19 years in what Amnesty International said were "very harsh conditions" before being freed under international pressure in 1991.

Maria Oufkir said recently the three had been "banned from leaving the country" and were refused passports. Oufkir was officially stated to have committed suicide in the wake of the coup and was accused of treason.

A French national helped the three to escape, taking them by boat to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta.

Saudis shaken by terror attacks, Fahd's illness

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Saudi Arabia, long a bastion of stability in a turbulent region, has been badly shaken in recent months by two major terrorist attacks and King Fahd's ailing health.

Tuesday's deadly attack on American soldiers near the eastern city of Dhahran was the bloodiest terror attack on Americans in the Gulf region.

As in past attacks, suspicion fell on Muslim militants who oppose the presence of Westerners in the kingdom, home to Islam's holiest shrines.

Last month, an executioner publicly beheaded four Muslim militants who bombed a U.S.-run military training facility in the capital Riyadh on Nov. 13, killing five Americans and two Indians.

All four men earlier had been shown on the state-run television network confessing to the bombing.

They claimed they had no links to any particular extremist group, but admitted they had been influenced by Islamic militants in Algeria and Egypt fighting to topple the secular governments in those countries and replace them with strict Islamic rule.

Ironically, Saudi Arabia already is a strict Muslim theocracy — but the dissidents accuse the ruling princes of corruption and being too influenced by Western culture.

The U.S. State Department warned last month that the American embassy in the Saudi capital had received an anonymous telephone call threatening attacks if the four men were punished.

The State Department said the embassy also had been sent drawings that implied bomb threats against Americans and the Saudi-American International School in Riyadh.

The jitters in the kingdom have been magnified by reports of King Fahd's declining health.

But the king resumed his duties Feb. 22 after a three-month illness, defying skeptics who said the elderly, ailing monarch would never return to rule Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter.

King Fahd, who is in his 70s, became sick in late November, just two weeks after the Riyadh bombing. The ailment was never officially disclosed, but U.S. officials said the overweight and diabetic monarch had suffered a stroke.

His illness sent anxiety through petroleum markets and raised speculation about the political future of the desert kingdom, the linchpin of Western policy in the Gulf.

The Saudis, along with other Gulf countries, also have been affected by anemic oil prices. The return of Iraq to international petroleum markets is likely to add further downward pressure on prices.

Saudi Arabia is not the only Gulf country to suffer turbulence recently. In neighbouring Bahrain, Shiite Muslim dissidents calling for the restoration of parliament have clashed repeatedly with security forces in the past 18 months. The dissidents also have been blamed for bomb attacks at several hotels.

Sarah Netanyahu aims to be Israel's first lady

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Sarah Netanyahu is set to shrug off the traditionally low-key role played by the wives of Israeli leaders as she bids to become a fully-fledged Americanised first lady.

Each time husband Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu appears in public she can be seen loyally by his side, dressed smartly in shades of pink and beige, with her head held high and always ready with an engaging smile.

She appears to model herself on U.S. First Lady Hilary Clinton, a style that fits perfectly with the suave presidential manners of her husband who became Israel's first directly elected prime minister with his victory in May 29 polls.

In the past Israeli prime ministers have always acknowledged the important role played by their wives, but the women themselves avoided the spotlight.

But "Bibi" Netanyahu, 46, sees things differently, and to make the point Sarah accompanied him to the opening of parliament after his election victory.

According to press reports, Mr. Netanyahu plans to set his wife up with her own government office, secretary, official car and media adviser — giving her unprecedented status for the wife of an Israeli prime minister.

Sarah herself hinted at a Hilary Clinton-style role in a radio interview last week. "I will be active in public while continuing my professional career," she said.

The 37-year-old former air stewardess has just completed a masters degree in child psychology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

She recently became a director of a drug rehabilitation centre and a centre for disadvantaged children.

Sarah, Mr. Netanyahu 's third wife, married her husband in 1991 after he met her on an aircraft while she was working as a stewardess and he was deputy foreign minister.

But the marriage has not all been plain sailing.

In January 1993 her husband, believing political enemies were trying to blackmail him, publicly confessed to having an adulterous affair and begged her forgiveness live on television.

Faced with the prospect of divorce, she reportedly told friends: "I feel like I am walking around with a knife in my heart."

But since then the couple have given the outward impression of living in marital bliss in keeping with Mr. Netanyahu's stance as a prime minister keen to defend the family values which Jewish culture holds so dear.

Sarah insists that her husband devote one day a week, the Sabbath, to being a family man without distractions. Every Saturday "Bibi" plays with his two small children, four-year-old Yair and Avner, 18 months.

Never one to pass up a photo opportunity, Mr. Netanyahu invited the press to capture these "private" family moments on film — a move unheard of in the history of Israeli politics.

Sarah Netanyahu's maiden name is Ben Arzi and she comes from a family of right-wing intellectuals who have lived for seven generations in Jerusalem.

But as yet nobody knows her political opinions. For somebody always in the media glare, she is surprisingly reticent.

Her intended role as first lady has already ruffled feathers in Israel's Labour opposition.

Labour Deputy Rafi Elul said Monday: "The law introducing direct elections for prime minister in no way provides for giving a special status to his wife."

"The state is not obliged to finance an office for his wife or a tutor for his children," Mr. Elul said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALLENDAR

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15:00 Double Dragon (Cartoon)
15:30 NBA
16:40 Pirates (doc.)
17:00 News Flash
17:02 *Children's Programme* — Les Polluards
17:30 Varietis — Les Monde Est A Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Carol and Company
20:00 Varieties — Taratara
21:10 Star Trek
22:00 News in English
22:25 Feature Film — Crystal Heart

PRAYER TIMES
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WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
The Kingdom will, during the weekend, remain under the effect of the heate wave which will decline on Saturday. Winds will be dusty, easterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot; winds will the northerly moderate to active and seas calm.
Amman 22/37
Aqaba 26/42
Deserts 20/40
Jordan Valley 25/41
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 36, Aqaba 42 Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 23 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Jamal Jbarah 847351
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 885446
Dr. Mohammad Al Izzah 752971
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy ...637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy ...637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qanu 281484
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Rabah Al Bourini 990312
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Reparis 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/52
Khalidi Maternity, ...644281/6
Akileh Maternity, ...642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, ...775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ...865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital(09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital(02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.
Information on other flights are supplied on phone **08 (52700)** or **08(53250).**

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:15 Sanaa (RJ)
9:55 Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:20 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi(RJ)
10:35 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Colombo (RJ)
11:00 Dubai (add) (RJ)
17:25 Casablanca (RJ)
17:30 London (RJ)
17:45 *New York, Amsterdam*(RJ)
19:00 ...Bangkok, Calcultta (RJ)
19:15 Athens (RJ)
20:00 Al 'Ain (RJ)
20:25 Rome (RJ)
22:00 Moscow (RJ)
01:15 Larnaca (RJ)

Other Flights
13:40 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:40 Shariqah (AH)
20:35 Cairo (MS)
20:55 Paris, Damascus (AF)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
23:40 Amsterdam (KL)
00:25 London (KJ)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
03:35 Antalia (TK)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:50 Aqaba (RW)
19:45 Tel Aviv (RW)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
04:00 Dubai (add) (RJ)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
11:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:25 Abu Dhabi Al 'Ain (RJ)
12:00 Moscow (RJ)
12:15 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto(RJ)
12:15 Rome (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:20 Athens (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
20:35 Larnaca (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)
21:30 New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
23:30..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights
04:00 Athens (OA)
06:00 Istanbul (TK)
07:45 Beirut, London (BA)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain, (GF)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:30 Algiers (AH)
21:25 Cairo (MS)
23:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)
04:00 Rome (AZ)
00:40 Anatalia(TK)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
10:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
20:30 Aqaba (from Tel Aviv) (RW)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN
Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upperflower price in fils per kg

Apricot	700/500
Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (Mukammar	520/520
Banana (imported)	800/600
Cabbage	100/70
Carrot	120/80
Cauliflower	350/220
Cucumber (large)	100/70
Cucumber (small)	150/100
Eggplant	220/140
Garlic	650/400
Lemon	820/500
Marrow (large)	150/100
Marrow (small)	210/150
Mulukhiah	130/80
Onion (dry)	130/80
Okra	900/600



supplies after a deal
$2 billion worth of
ns (Reuters photo)

16th Arab Children's Congress to open

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Arab children will gather in Jordan next month for the 16th Arab Children's Congress under the theme "Science and Creativity," according to the preparatory committee which Wednesday announced the final arrangements for the event to be held in Amman on July 1.

During a meeting with the press, Ibrahim Badran, executive director at the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), which organises the event, said this year will be devoted to children's issues.

"The foundation perceives the child's issue as a complete and comprehensive issue, and we are concerned with their rights, health, education, cultural and educational affairs," Dr. Badran said.

Dr. Badran stressed that the congress will take on a new angle, i.e., developing the creativity and thinking spirit of children.

"We want to develop children's character by encouraging them to think and be creative rather than following the traditional system of learning by route," Dr. Badran told reporters.

He said the aim is to connect the child with education and relate it to the future of the nation "which requires creative power from our children."

The conference will use workshops, creative methods for learning such as drama, music and painting as well as arts in education.

It will highlight the latest developments in the region by encouraging participating children to understand contemporary events happening and challenges facing the Arab nations and the ancient historical and cultural bonds shared by all Arabs.

The gathering will tackle the Arab children's present state and emphasise the need to exert efforts to apply their rights in all countries.

Dr. Badran announced that 69 authors and writers from the Arab world and Jordan are competing for the Queen Noor Award for Children's Literature.

He said that this year's streams include scientific literature and poetry and anthems.

The objective of the award, according to Dr. Badran is to encourage the production of quality Arabic children's literature and to promote the production of literature in order to help develop the child's mental and scientific thinking skills.

Director of the congress Lina Tal announced the participating countries in the event as Morocco, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Palestine, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sudan and Jordan. She added that other countries are expected to announce their participation in the next few days.

Her Majesty Queen Noor will open the children's congress on July 1, at the Roman Amphitheatre. Events at the opening will include a musical play entitled "Li Ajlihem", folklore music performed by the Jordan Armed Forces Band and the congress song "Watanon Wahed" which will be sung by the participating children.

During the one-week activity, the children will also visit schools, as well as cultural and scientific institutions.

Ms. Tal said a new magazine entitled "Arab Children's Congress Magazine" was inaugurated this year especially to cover and document the congress events and proceedings.

Initiated by Queen Noor after the 1980 Arab summit in Amman, the Arab Children's Conference aims at bringing together Arab children from various parts of the region to participate in a programme of cultural activities, discussions and visits to historical sites and development projects in the Kingdom.

"We want Arab children to know what Jordan is, not just to read about it in the books," Dr. Badran said.

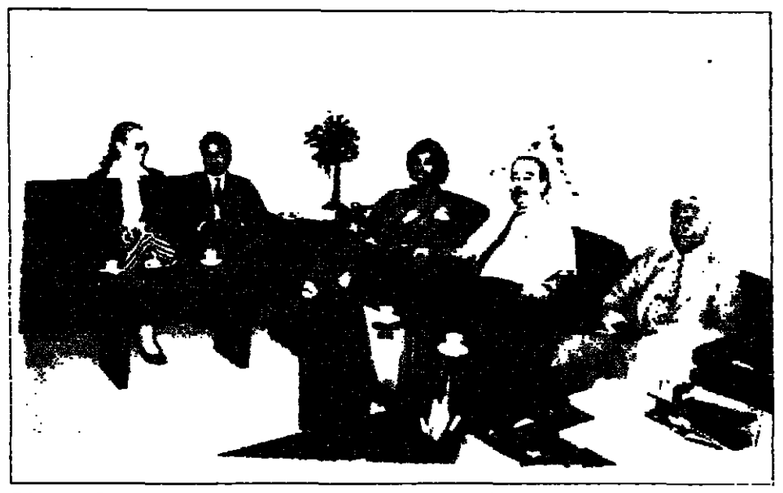
According to Ms. At Tel, the congress recommendations will be reviewed by Queen Noor, then sent to the Arab League.

PNA, Jordanian ministers review areas of social development cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Minister of Social Development Intisar Al Wazir Wednesday met here with her Jordanian counterpart Hamad Abu Jamous and briefed him on the current social situation in the self-rule areas of Palestine.

Mrs. Wazir outlined her department's needs for Jordanian assistance and briefed him on the requirements of the social institutions and non-governmental organisations and their activities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Abu Jamous and Mrs Wazir discussed cooperation between the two sides in promoting social services, the exchange of expertise in social matters, and conducting studies of laws and regulations on social services conducted by private and public sectors.



Director General of the Palestine Affairs Department Ibrahim Tarshihi (second right) Wednesday meets with a UN mission sent to the region to investigate Israel's practices and human rights violations in Palestine. The representatives, from right to left, come from Sri Lanka, Senegal, Malaysia and Argentina (Petra photo)

UN mission arrives

Meanwhile, the Director General of the Palestine Affairs Department Ibrahim Tarshihi Wednesday received a UN mission sent to the region to investigate Israel's practices and human rights violations in Palestine.

Mr. Tarshihi outlined to the mission the repressive measures practised by Israel against the Palestinians, noting that such measures contravene the Jordan-Israel peace treaty

He said the Israelis continue to conduct mass arrests, demolish Arab homes, seize Arab-owned land, build settlements and open roads on Arab lands and pursue a drive to Judaise the city of Jerusalem by building settlements within the city's Arab sector.

The UN mission arrived in Amman earlier Wednesday on a tour of Jordan, Egypt, and Syria to collect information about Israel's practices in the occupied Arab lands to be submitted in a report to the UN General Assembly meeting in autumn.

JWU responds to Ben Baz fatwa

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) Wednesday strongly condemned a fatwa (Islamic ruling) by Saudi Arabia's leading cleric and mufti Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ben Baz in which he alleged that women who go out of the home to work are susceptible to committing adultery and thus become unfaithful to their husbands.

A JWU statement said that world statistics have shown a large proportion of families in Jordan and elsewhere depend to a large extent on their sustenance on women's earnings from work outside their homes in view of continuous increases in the cost of living and the inability of men to meet the requirements of their households on their own.

It has been established that the majority of women go to work primarily to supplement their family income and ensure a better future for their children, according to the statement.

It said that world statistics show that women constitute two-thirds of the total number of poor and needy people and two-thirds of unemployed persons in the world, although they have equal rights to work as do men.

The Ben Baz fatwa said the statement considers the body of a woman an object, but totally ignores her soul, her mind, intellect and will and ignores the status of a woman as an individual with the right to choose, decide and reject, and accept different things and protect her dignity and realise her responsibilities.

The fatwa casts doubts on women's faith and their ability to be committed to their religion and calls for women's imprisonment at home for fear of committing adultery which is also committed by men, added the statement.

It said that the fatwa empowers men to commit the crime of depriving women of their freedoms and of their rights by keeping them at home and as such this fatwa considers women as lacking capacity for work and of being inferior to men.

The statement reminded Sheikh Ben Baz that scores of Muslim women participated in active fighting and in holy wars (jihad) and undertook various other occupations throughout Islamic history.

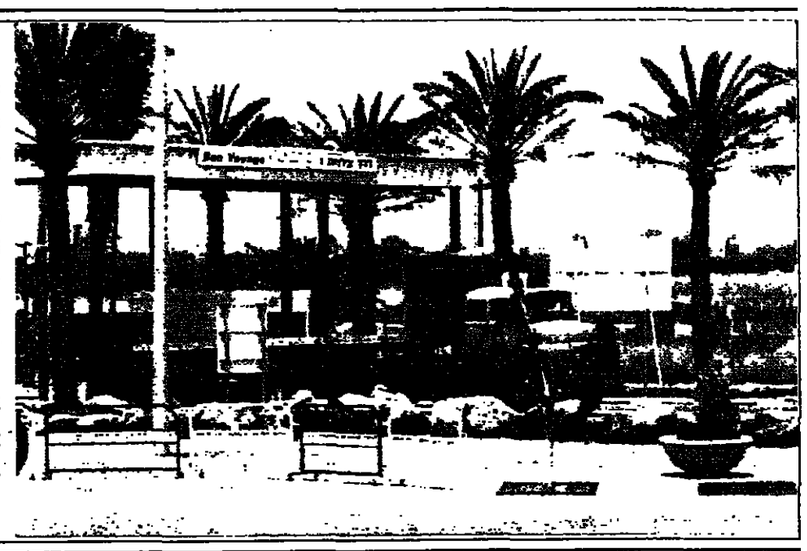
The statement which was issued after an emergency meeting by the JWU's executive committee to reply to the fatwa said that the JWU has decided to issue this statement and also to take a series of steps in response to the ideas it contains stressing that Islam is the faith of equality and justice, respect of human rights and dignity and respect of all women's rights to work and to shoulder their responsibilities towards ensuring sufficient income for their families.

The statement appealed to Muslim scholars and intellectuals to reply to this unacceptable fatwa which "does not serve Islam or respect the right of women working in the fields, in the badia, in trade, in industry and other aspects of public life, something that women have been doing for centuries."

It stressed that Islam does not consider women's work as contravening her femininity or her motherhood or marital responsibilities neither does Islam consider work for women as opening the doors for adultery.

It said that women still face injustice as they continue the struggle to achieve parity with men under the provisions of the constitution adding that by depriving women of their rights as a way of trying to escape responsibilities and economic and social failures would not help any society to cater to the needs of the modern age.

Last September and in a statement on the eve of the convening of the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing, Sheikh Ben Baz was quoted as calling on Muslims to boycott the conference because he said its agenda included decisions that contradict Islam.



A Jordanian truck Wednesday crosses over into Israel where it was to load up on a delivery of soya bean meal and return to Jordan. Jordan and Israel Wednesday began overland transport of goods in implementation of the bilateral agreement between the two countries. (photo by Tawfiq Taji)

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILMS

"The Third Man" at the American Center on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

"Le Masculin" at Institute Cervantes, Jabal Amman, on Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

"Monsieur Rene Magritte" (with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khalid Kbeili) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

JAPAN WEEK

• Japanese traditional music at El-Hassan Bin Talal Auditorium, University of Jordan on Friday (2:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

• Paintings by Dutch artist Marion Verbeeten entitled "Impressions of Jordan" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until June 30.

• Ceramics exhibition at Jordan Design and Trade Centre off Wadi Saqra Street (Tel. 694402) until July 25.

• Display of hand-made carpets by Mas'ud Basha at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman (Tel. 639383), until June 27.

• Abstract Plastic art by Arab women artists at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 687698), until July 4.

• Works by contemporary Arab artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 30.

• Works by Rafic Majdali at the French Cultural Centre, until June 27.

• Works by Ahmad Nawash at the Jordan Plastic Arts Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 29. Tel. 623297.

Witnesses continue testimony in CID case

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The State Security Court Wednesday continued hearing prosecution witnesses in the case of six men accused of attacking the office of the Central Intelligence Department (CID) at Baqaa refugee camp in December 1994.

The prosecution charged that on Dec. 26, five of the defendants went to Baqaa camp and sprayed the CID building with bullets from a machine gun, injuring one officer.

The sixth defendant was apprehended by the authorities three days before the incident occurred on another charge, but is standing trial in the CID case charged with complicity in plotting the attack.

Major Abdul Majid Momani, director of the Baqaa Refugee Camp Police Station, told the court that he heard gunshots while he was in the second floor of the building.

When he peaked from the window, he said he saw a hooded person standing in the school yard next to the CID building and holding a machine gun in his hand.

"I started firing at him, but I missed, and he got away," Maj. Momani said.

Major Suleiman Sarairah, of the Baqaa police station said he received an order from the state prosecutor to search for weapons at a house in Ein Basha area near Baqaa and for pamphlets at a shop in Baqaa camp.

He said he took the first and second defendants, Tha'er Yousef Mahmoud and Shadi Jawdat, to a "deserted house" in Ein Basha.

"The first defendant (Tha'er) led me to a tree near the fence and dug 30 centimetres underground. There we found the weapons wrapped in a black plastic bag," Maj. Sarairah said.

He added that the seized weapons, according to the police register, included two machine guns, 99 live bullets and two magazines.

He added that he went to a shop in Baqaa that belonged to the second defendant's father and "after searching the place we found pamphlets and religious booklets in the attic of the shop."

"The pamphlets contained material that was slanderous to His Majesty the King and the security departments," he said.

According to the State Prosecutor charge sheet, the defendants are charged with assault and intent to block the appropriate authorities (CID) from exercising their duties in accordance with the Constitution and the distribution of pamphlets slandering King Hussein.

The charge sheet said that the suspects started their activities in April 1994 and plotted to carry out extremist attacks on tourists and security departments in the Kingdom.

At the end of the three-hour court session, State Prosecutor Lieutenant Colonel Mahmoud Obeidat asked the court to give him time to call the last prosecution witness in the case.

The court tribunal agreed and set July 6 to continue hearing the case.

الأسبوع اليابانى فى الأردن
JAPAN WEEK IN JORDAN
日本週間

Japanese Traditional Music

عروض موسيقية يابانية تقليدية

June 28 . 1996 7 : 30 pm
June 29 . 1996 7 : 30 pm

at the University of Jordan, El-Hassan Bin Talal Auditorium

يوم الجمعة ١٩٩٦/٦/٢٨ الساعة ٧,٣٠ مساءً
ويوم السبت ١٩٩٦/٦/٢٩ الساعة ٧,٣٠ مساءً

في مدرج الحسن بن طلال ، الجامعة الأردنية



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مجانًا .. بالتعاون مع مؤسسة اليابان

Yeltsin pledges change, Zyuganov stands firm

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin, who sacked four hardliners and ousted seven generals after the first round of Russia's presidential election, said in an interview published Wednesday he planned further personnel changes.

But his campaign team is worried about voter apathy and Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov, who celebrates his 52nd birthday Wednesday, still insists he will win on July 3.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, sacked seven army generals Tuesday, all of them closely linked to hawkish former Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, who was fired after popular General Alexander Lebed moved into the Kremlin camp.

"I am forming a new team, relying on the opinion of voters. New, authoritative and professional people, like Alexander Lebed, are coming," Mr. Yeltsin told the weekly paper Argumenty I Fakty, referring to Gen. Lebed's strong showing in the June 16 first round.

"There will be more personnel changes, more new specialists will arrive to create a serious, strong and long-lasting team."

Mr. Yeltsin brought law-and-order presidential candidate Gen. Lebed into his team of advisers two days after the first round.

"If 14 per cent of Russians trusted Lebed, we may consider that he has passed the exam giving him the right to work professionally in big politics," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Gen. Lebed's arrival was followed by the departure of hawkish Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and three other hardliners, including Alexander Korzhakov, the influential head of Mr. Yeltsin's personal security team.

Mr. Yeltsin seems to have relished sweeping aside a string of officials, but the possibility that his message might not reach the voters is much more worrying to his campaign team.

Mr. Yeltsin came just three points ahead of Mr. Zyuganov in the first round and a presidential campaigner said this was only because turnout rose towards the end of the day.

Vyacheslav Nikonov said Tuesday that Mr. Zyuganov was leading across the country until 6 p.m. (1400 GMT), when more Yeltsin supporters began turning up and swung the vote.

"Turnout of under 60 per cent is a dangerous threshold below which Mr. Zyuganov's victory is possible," he said.

But Mr. Zyuganov challenged the view that the bigger the turnout, the better for Mr. Yeltsin, whose supporters may be younger and less ingrained with Communist-era discipline.

"If we add say five or seven per cent to the turnout in regions where we received solid support, we will get five or seven more per cent (in the second round)," Mr. Zyuganov said.

"We have set ourselves the task of going to every house and every family and inviting them individually (to vote)," he said. "We are sure the result will be in our favour. We are sure."

Communists complain that the media is biased in favour of Mr. Yeltsin, who has appeared on television virtually every day for the past four months.

Television campaigning started Wednesday with Mr. Yeltsin's camp drawing heavily on the horrors of Communist rule, like the 1920s famine. Mr. Zyuganov, appearing personally on television, targetted Mr. Yeltsin's record in office.

The president also signed a decree Tuesday ordering troops to start pulling out of Chechenya from Friday, a pre-election move that his commander in the breakaway region has already begun preparing.

More than 30,000 people have been killed in the breakaway Caucasus region since December 1994 when Mr. Yeltsin sent in troops to crush an independence bid.

President Yeltsin told officer cadets Wednesday that Russia's army needed major reforms to ensure the country's security.

Speaking at a Kremlin ceremony for graduates of military academies a week before his runoff election battle, Mr. Yeltsin said: "Russia's army is on the threshold of deep transformations," Interfax News Agency reported.

Mr. Yeltsin has already committed Russia to switching to a professional army and ending conscription. Critics say the switch to all-volunteer mobile forces is unaffordable.

The president said the risk of global confrontation was now smaller but Russia still faced regional problems. "special concern is aroused by plans for the expansion of NATO and for a new division of Europe."

He referred to the Chechenya war, in which several thousand Russian soldiers and tens of thousands of civilians have been killed, as "a serious test of the moral fibre of Russian soldiers" and said they had shown their "best qualities" in the conflict, which he is trying to end.

Mr. Yeltsin said much still remained to be done to reform the army.



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (left) toasts with acting Defence Minister General Mikhail Kolesnikov in the Kremlin Wednesday. Mr. Yeltsin was receiving graduated cadets of Russia's military academies (Reuter photo)

Wife of Kashmir hostage longs to hold him again

SRINAGAR, India (R) — The wife of one of four foreign hostages in Kashmir made a tearful plea Wednesday for news about her husband, saying she longed to hold him in her arms again.

Jane Schelley, wife of American Donald Hutchings, broke into tears several times during an emotional news conference in Srinagar, summer capital of mostly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state, Jammu and Kashmir.

"I want to know where my husband is," Mrs. Schelley told hushed listeners. "There is no wife or mother who cannot understand my longing to hold my husband in my arms once again."

Mrs. Schelley, a school teacher from Washington state, returned to Kashmir Tuesday, only days before the one-year anniversary of her husband's kidnapping.

Mr. Hutchings along with Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells was captured by Al Faran separatist militants on July 4, 1995, while hiking in south Kashmir. Mrs. Schelley was with her husband at the time but was not taken.

Four days later Al Faran kidnapped German Dirk Hasert and Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe. Ostroe was found beheaded last August.

Mrs. Schelley wore a green salwar kameez ensemble, traditional dress in Kashmir and adjoining parts of northern India and Pakistan. Green is commonly associated with Islam.

Overcome by emotion, Mrs. Schelley stopped several times to compose herself. When she finished her statement, reporters, apparently moved by her words, declined to ask questions.

Mrs. Schelley, who said she was unable to explain to her pupils why her husband was being held captive, appealed to Al Faran to abide by Muslim tenets and release the four hostages.

"Islam is a religion of peace and love," she said. "The tradition of this great faith has no place for the taking and holding of hostages. It is wrong and inhumane....It is injustice to the Muslim faith."

She praised India for its efforts to win the hostages' release and said there was no evidence to support Al Faran's claims the captive tourists had been held by the government.

Those claims have prompted concern on the part of foreign diplomats that the militants might have killed the hostages and later wanted to pin the blame on India.

"In my heart I believe that my husband is still alive and I will continue to make efforts tirelessly till he is released." Mrs. Schelley said.

Negotiations between the government and Al Faran broke down last November, and the hostages have not been sighted for some time. But Indian officials say they believe they are alive.

Al Faran was unknown before the kidnappings. India claims it is linked to Pakistan-based Harkat-Ul-Ansar, one of dozens of militant groups fighting Indian rule in Jammu and Kashmir. More than 20,000 people have died in the revolt since 1990.

Mrs. Schelley said the hostage-taking was fruitless. "Al Faran seems to be holding them, but who is Al Faran? We do not know. But who profits from it? Does Al Faran profit? No one profits, every one loses."

She asked journalists to sent a message to her husband through the radio or print media.

"Don, be strong," she said, asking her husband to support and nurture the three other hostages. "You know, Don, that I love you very, very much."

India army joins relief mission in flood-hit state

JAIPUR, India (R) — The Indian army joined relief operations in the north-western desert state of Rajasthan Tuesday as the death toll from four days of torrential rain in the normally arid region rose to 40, authorities said.

They said four people died overnight in rain-related incidents in the state, which is a popular destination for foreign tourists.

Nagaur district, in the centre of the state which borders Pakistan, was the hardest hit with 18 deaths.

P.N. Kapur of the state's Hydrology Department said monsoon storms dumped a record 36 cm (14 inches) of rain on Nagaur in 24 hours between Sunday and Monday, more than its average annual rainfall of 31 cm.

By Tuesday afternoon, Nagaur had received 68 cm (27 inches).

Soldiers helped relief and rescue operations in Nagaur and Jodhpur districts, and in some areas the air force dropped boats to help marooned villagers, officials said.

The army was also called in to Alwar and Bharatpur districts where irrigation dams were close to overflowing, threatening floods.

Bharatpur is the site of one of India's most famous bird sanctuaries. Authorities said there was no major damage to the national park there.

Water reservoirs in Jaisalmer, a popular tourist destination in the Thar desert near the Pakistani border where it seldom rains, has received enough rain in the past week to last for 10 years, authorities said.

The heavy rainfall was expected to spur the growth of desert shrubs used to feed camel and sheep.

But it was also expected to lead to an increase in malaria cases. Last year more than 200 people died of malaria in Rajasthan after heavy rains.

In the Kashmir Valley, six people drowned Tuesday, raising the toll in flash floods in the Himalayan region over the past week to 16, United News of India said.

Bangladesh premier leads ruling party in prayers at father's grave

DHAKA (AFP) — After a 21-year wait, new Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed Wednesday officially honoured her assassinated father, the country's founding father.

A Muslim cleric led the prime minister, cabinet ministers and Awami League MPs in prayers at the grave of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who guided this South Asian country to independence from Pakistan in 1971.

The military bugle played the last post and the green and red national flag was lowered as a tearful Sheikh Hasina and thousands of mourning villagers stood in silence before the marble-covered grave at her family's compound, witnesses said.

Rahman's bullet-ridden body was hurriedly buried here on Aug. 16, 1975, a day after he was killed in a military coup. Until Wednesday, he had received no state honours.

Mrs. Hasina then offered prayers, bursting into tears as her husband, daughter, son and relatives surrounded her.

The other deceased members of Rahman's family, including his wife, three sons and two daughters-in-law, are buried in Dhaka.

Tens of thousands of residents met the prime minister's helicopter when she flew into Gopalganj district's Tungipara village, 115 kilometres from the capital, Dhaka, earlier Wednesday with her colleagues, most of whom arrived by bus.

The leaders of the 1975 military coup which toppled Rahman are believed to have buried him in his family's ancestral village instead of in Dhaka where he was killed in order to minimise public unrest and to discourage the growth of a Rahman cult.

Most of the coup leaders reportedly left Bangladesh soon after Mrs. hasina's Awami League emerged as the single largest parliamentary party in the June 12 general elections.

But she has said she would abide by the laws of the land. A trial of the coup leaders is blocked by a constitutional act.

Mrs. Hasina was making her first trip to her father's grave since being sworn in as the politically volatile country's 10th prime minister Sunday.

Mrs. Hasina's cabinet Monday ordered that "only the portrait of the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, should be hung in government offices and in the offices of semi-government and autonomous bodies."

The move away from displaying the prime minister's portrait was widely seen here as Sheikh Hasina's first step towards restoring her father's lost honour. Successive governments have refused to recognise his role in guiding Bangladesh to independence.

Rahman, born in 1922 and fondly called Bangabandhu or "friend of Bengal," was first jailed after being arrested during a political protest at age 18.

"As a man, what concerns mankind concerns me," he wrote in his diary in 1972. "As a Bangalee (Bengali) I am deeply involved in all that concerns Bangalees. This abiding involvement is born of and nourished by love, enduring love, which gives meaning to my politics and to my very being."

N. Korea calls for dissolution of U.N. Command in South

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea's Foreign Ministry Wednesday called for the dissolution of the United Nations Command in South Korea, charging that it had no legal basis and was "a fabricated product of the cold war."

"The U.N. Forces Command in South Korea has no legal basis. And the U.S. forces are the only ones that remain under it today," the North's mouthpiece Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) quoted a ministry memorandum as saying.

"It was not organised by a U.N. resolution, but it was fabricated through the abuse of the name of the U.N. It is a product of the cold war," the memorandum, monitored in Seoul added.

North Korea has long been trying to win a peace treaty with the United States and the withdrawal of the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea under the U.N. flag by scuttling the armistice mechanism.

The armistice agreement is the only formal mechanism for the two sides to communicate on holding the truce since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, and analysts say that by repudiating sections of it, Pyongyang is trying to play on fears of an accidental outbreak of war to win a peace treaty with the United States.

Washington has said any peace treaty must also involve the government of South Korea, and the administration of President Bill Clinton has pledged to keep U.S. troops in South Korea as long as Seoul wants them to stay.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said in 1994 that he hoped the U.N. command could be dissolved, but only when it is warranted by a real situation of peace on the divided peninsula.

"Over the last 46 years, the 'U.N. Forces Command' has not reported to the U.N. properly on its work nor has it received orders from the U.N., it has acted only under the control of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff," the memorandum argued.

Calling the U.N. Command "none other than U.S. forces," who were an appendix to the U.S.-South Korean combined forces command, the memorandum said Washington "must proclaim the dissolution of the U.N. Command in South Korea, and the United Nations must take a measure to withdraw its flag."

It also called on governments represented in the U.N. Command to "take measures to withdraw their flags so that they can contribute to peace and detente on the Korean peninsula, though belatedly."

North Korea, it said, would do all it could to ensure the U.N. Command was dissolved and "establish a new peace mechanism to prevent armed conflicts and war on the Korean peninsula."

Fifteen countries in addition to the United States fought for the South during the Korean War, while thousands of Chinese "volunteers" entered the war to fight with the North.

Meanwhile Kim Jong-Il's formal succession as North Korean leader has been delayed to July 1997 due to an extension of the national mourning period for his late father, Kim Il-Sung, a report Tokyo said Wednesday.

The Yomiuri Shimbun, quoting unidentified sources in Beijing, said the mourning period had been extended by a year due to urgent requests from the people. The elder Kim died in July 1994.

"The North Korean public's veneration of Kim Il-Sung remains strong and there has been a growing demand that the mourning period for the late president should end after the third anniversary next year," one of the sources was quoted saying.

However, the daily said that the real reason could be the unprecedented economic crisis gripping the isolated Stalinist state, aggravated by record food shortages caused by floods last year.

The crisis makes it a bad time for Kim Jong-Il to take over in July the official positions held by his father, state president and general secretary of the ruling Communist Workers' Party, the paper commented.

Several North Korea experts in Tokyo share this view, saying it would be much easier for Mr. Kim to present himself as North Korea's "new sun" in a year's time when the food shortages have been eased by the autumn harvest.

North Korea's ambassador in Beijing, Ju Chang Jun, recently announced that the transfer would be completed in July following two years of mourning. Mr. Kim already holds the posts of chairman of the National Defence Commission and supreme commander of the armed forces.

Kim Jong-Il, 54, is regarded as the country's ruler despite not having formally taken over the reins of power. There have been no signs of any organised opposition to him.



Thai drugs cocktail goes up in smoke

BANGKOK — Thai police destroyed nearly a tonne of illegal drugs in a bonfire at Bangkok's Police Academy Wednesday. Heroin, opium, marijuana and amphetamines seized by police over the past year were set alight in a biannual ceremony organised by Thailand's narcotics control board. Since 1977, more than 32 tonnes of assorted drugs have been destroyed in 17 such ceremonies, a police statement said. Under Thai law, drugs seized as evidence must be destroyed once prosecuters have completed their cases. The photograph shows a Thai policeman alighting a giant tray containing drugs during the narcotics destruction ceremony at the police compound in Bangkok Wednesday (Reuter photo)

They're changing to green at Buckingham Palace

LONDON (R) — Energy saving measures at Britain's royal palaces are set to save taxpayers thousands of pounds a year as well as curbing pollution, a report published Tuesday said. The report from the Royal Household to parliament said government spending on the palaces totalled £20.4 million ($31.4 million) last year, little changed from the previous year. But it said officials were making strenuous efforts to reduce costs by going green. A combined heat and power plant has already been installed in Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth's London residence, and now one is planned for Windsor Castle, her country home west of the capital. Together they should cut electricity costs by £70,000, the report said. Further energy saving measures have reduced the lighting load at Buckingham Palace by 57,000 watts. And gas use by the Royal Household fell 23 per cent last year thanks to better insulation, modification of boilers and the fitting of light sensors to operate 19th century gas lamps outside the various palaces. Heir to the throne Prince Charles is a keen environmentalist.

Mystery collector boosts London art market

LONDON (R) — A mysterious woman bidder has spent at least £10 million ($16 million) on impressionist paintings at a Sotheby's auction, boosting London's flagging art market. A spokesman for Sotheby's said it was not clear exactly how many paintings the woman bought, but he said she snapped up three of the four most expensive paintings in Monday's auction. "She's a woman, she's a private collector, and she lives in Europe," was all the spokesman could say about the buyer, adding that she made her bids by telephone. The spokesman said the sale, which continued Tuesday, showed revived interest in the art market.

Astronauts call home as marathan mission continues

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — Astronauts aboard the shuttle Columbia took the afternoon off to relax and chat with their families five days into a mission which NASA hopes will be the longest shuttle flight ever. The crew, which includes two medical doctors, a veterinarian and astronauts representing the French and Canadian space agencies, were given a half-day break from research into the effects of space travel on the human body. Columbia's seven astronauts hope to stay in space for nearly 17 days.

Major urges Diana to accept settlement — daily

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major has urged Princess Diana to accept a multimillion pound settlement for a divorce from Prince Charles, the Sun reported. Britain's best selling tabloid said Mr. Major made the plea at a 45-minute meeting with the princess at her London home. Princess Diana, 34, has been embroiled in a bitter divorce battle with the heir to the throne since she agreed to end their 15-year marriage earlier this year. The Sun said Buckingham Palace had sent Mr. Major details of the proposed settlement, believed to be about £20 million ($30 million) and to include a large annual income and properties and expenses.



Elections officials check residents' identity documents outside a polling station in this black township south of Durban Wednesday. South Africa's volatile Kwazulu-Natal province begins to vote in local government elections that appeared set to belie fears of political violence (Reuter photo)

S. African warring factions swap guns for votes

DURBAN, South Africa (R) — Warring parties in South Africa's volatile Kwazulu-Natal province laid aside their weapons Wednesday to vote in local government elections that belied fears of political violence.

Police and election monitors reported a calm start to voting, thanks in part to the deployment of more than 30,000 police and troops in the the two weeks leading up to the poll.

"All is quiet but going quite well. Voters are trickling in and so far we've had only a few minor hitches," said an election official in the Indian Ocean port of Durban.

About 3.5 million people are eligible to vote in the rural and municipal polls which will erase the last administrations left over from the apartheid era that ended with all-race national elections in April 1994.

Most of the country voted last November for new local councils but fighting between President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party forced voting in Kwazulu-Natal to be postponed three times.

More than 14,000 people have been killed in ANC-Inkatha feuding in the territory since the mid-1980s and more than a dozen candidates have been murdered in the run-up to the polls.

Casting his vote in the Bhambayi Shack settlement north of Durban, ANC supporter Amon Cwera, 28, said he was sure peace would prevail.

"The voting will be peaceful...There will be no violence because we are cooperating along with the IFP. We are cooperating well and there is no problem," he told Reuters.

The peaceful start to voting helped South Africa's financial markets to an upbeat opening Wednesday. Market analysts said a free and fair poll would be good news for the rand, which has lost a fifth of its value against the dollar since mid-February.

The election is a crucial test for the ANC and the conservative IFP, led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, which took 51 per cent of the provincial vote here in 1994.

Political analysts expect Mr. Mandela's party to win in the cities while the IFP, with its ties to traditional chiefs, should take most of the countryside.

Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape are the only two provinces which are not ruled by the ANC. The party made some gains in the Western Cape, where voting took place last month, but the white-led National Party of F.W. De Klerk won a strong lead there, mainly with the backing of mixed-race coloureds.

Voting ends at 10 p.m. (2000 GMT). First results are expected early Thursday and final returns Friday or later.

Russian negotiators in bid to save Chechen peace process

MOSCOW (AFP) — Senior Russian government officials arrived in Chechenya Wednesday to revive stalled peace talks with Chechen rebel leaders amid concern that accords already reached were not being implemented.

Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov and his deputies Sergei Stepashin and Vladimir Zorin were due to hold talks Thursday with the Chechen rebels, who have been fighting for independence from Russia for the last 18 months.

Mr. Mikhailov said the high-level visit to the devastated Chechen capital Grozny was vital to save a peace accord signed on June 10. Apart from a tense ceasefire, the accord has barely been implemented.

He said the talks would cover "all violations of the accord and the ceasefire."

"We are ready for difficult talks and have no time limits. We need to use the only chance for peace," he was quoted as saying by Interfax.

The negotiators were also to meet with the Russian military command in the breakaway north Caucasus republic, the Russian-installed authorities and mediators from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The June 10 accord called for demilitarisation of Chechenya, including a major Russian troop withdrawal by the end of August, followed by free elections in which all sides could take part.

The thorny question of Chechenya's political status was left aside.

President Boris Yeltsin issued a decree Tuesday ordering a troop withdrawal by Sept. 1, but it was unclear how many of the approximately 40,000 troops deployed in Chechenya were affected.

The Kremlin said any pull-out would depend on "the stability of the situation."

Mikhailov told Interfax he was concerned about "terrorist actions" carried out by opposition forces in Chechenya.

Yuri Plugin, deputy interior minister in the Moscow-backed Chechen government, told ITAR-TASS that the severed heads of two Russian "Kontraktniki," or mercenary soldiers, were found near a cinema in central Grozny Wednesday.

Mr. Plugin blamed rebel "revenge squads" for the killings.

The pro-Moscow authorities also accused the rebels of firing on Russian troops in violation of the ceasefire.

On May 27 Mr. Yeltsin reached a peace accord in the Kremlin with Chechen rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, and he has stepped up efforts to resolve the Chechenya conflict in a bid to secure reelection.

Mr. Yeltsin faces a crucial second round runoff against Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov on July 3.

Some 40,000 people, mostly civilians, have died in the Chechenya conflict, triggered by a massive Russian military intervention in December 1994 aimed at crushing the separatists' independence bid.

Mr. Mikhailov said the negotiators — members of the Russian State Commission on Chechenya — would also try to establish appropriate conditions for holding the second round of Russian presidential elections in Chechenya.

The rebels and their supporters boycotted the first round and simultaneous elections to the Russian-installed parliament in Chechenya.

Mr Yeltsin's new National Security supremo Alexander Lebed, a gruff law-and-order nationalist, is expected to visit Chechenya shortly, Echo Moscow radio reported.

Gen. Lebed, a retired general who joined Mr. Yeltsin's inner circle last week after coming third in the first round presidential vote with 14.5 per cent, has been pushing for a radical peace programme in Chechenya, including allowing the Chechens to decide their own future political status.

In a clear sign to Gen Lebed's supporters that he is fulfilling the general's agenda, Mr. Yeltsin last week sacked Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, and seven top generals allied to Gen Grachev were dismissed Tuesday.

Gen Lebed [illegible] in the State Duma, Vladimir Lukov, said that while Gen. Lebed was not officially due to be going anywhere in the next two days, his boss never gave notice of his intentions.

Battle of Little Bighorn remembered

BILLINGS, Montana (R) — Whites and Indians Tuesday remembered the Battle of the Little Bighorn where Gen. Custer's 7th Cavalry was defeated 120 years ago by a combined force of plains Indians.

Gen. George Armstrong Custer and 268 of his men and Indian scouts of the Crow and Arikara tribes were killed in the June 25-26 battle in 1876, which was a blow to the United States in its centennial year.

Descendants of survivors of the battle held a pipe ceremony at dawn and ate buffalo meat with other visitors to the controversial battlefield site where a granite obelisk honours Gen. Custer atop Last Stand Hill.

Members of the Lakota Sioux tribe rode up to the monument boundary — horses are not allowed on the grounds — where they dismounted to perform a ceremony called "counting coups," in which warriors touch a foe with a stick.

The "coup sticks" were handed to women members of the tribe who touched the stone obelisk with the sticks.

The site, previously called the Custer Battlefield National Monument and renamed the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, has long been a focus for controversy.

The controversy is expected to continue when the U.S. government solicits designs for a memorial to honour the Indians who died in the battle, including Gen. Custer's scouts.

Interior Department sources said an official announcement is expected to be made Thursday in Washington.

A memorial to the Indians was authorised by Congress in 1991 and calls for the monument to be compatible in scale with the existing obelisk for Gen. Custer and his men.

The monument's superintendent, Gerard Baker, a member of the Mandan Hidatsa Indian tribe, has tried to make ceremonies more meaningful for Indians, a park spokeswoman said.

While Gen. Custer's defeat sparked anger among white Americans, it was a moment of pride for the Indian tribes as they tried to preserve their nomadic way of life on the plains.

White House accessed hundreds more FBI files than previously disclosed

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The White House gathered 300 more FBI files on officials from the former Bush and Reagan administrations than aides had previously disclosed, according to documents handed over to a congressional committee.

The files, which include former CIA director Robert Gates and former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, bring to 700 the total number of files the White House improperly sought from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1993 and early 1994.

The ever-widening scandal, dubbed "Filegate" by the media, is being investigated by congressional panels and independent counsel Kenneth Starr, causing increasing embarrassment to President Bill Clinton in the midst of his reelection campaign.

The White House maintains that the incident was an innocent mistake caused by an outdated list of people with security clearance for the White House. Republicans believe the file requests were motivated by a desire to dig up dirt on political opponents.

The documents on the additional FBI files were given Tuesday to the House reform and oversight committe by Anthony Marceca, an army investigator who had been assigned to the White House at the start of the Clinton administration in 1993 and who is now at the centre of the scandal.

Mr. Marceca was expected to testify Wednesday before the House panel.

Also Tuesday, sources close to the investigation said that suspended White House personnel security chief Craig Livingstone, the official who requested the FBI files in the first place, told congressional investigators that the files were reviewed by his superior in the White House before he received them.

Mr. Livingstone's boss at the time was former White House deputy counsel William Kennedy.

Mr. Livingstone's reported statement would be in conflict with the White House's characterisation of Livingstone as an independent operation who requested the files in a "bureaucratic snafu."

And FBI general counsel Howard Shapiro wrote the House committee late Tuesday that the FBI had discovered another 216 requests for background files from the White House.

Although it was unclear if those requests overlapped with the additional 300 documents cited by Mr. Marceca, Mr. Shapiro said the 216 requests were on people whose last name began with the letters "F" through "Y."

The 400 FBI files initially requested by the Clinton administration covered the letters "A" through "G."

Mr. Shapiro told the House committee that it had not been determined whether the additional files were requested legitimately by the White House.

The "Filegate" scandal has prompted the FBI to tighten White House access to its files, and a review of security operations at the White House.

While Mr. Marceca's lawyer, Robert Muse, said Tuesday that the alphabetical order of the new files "repudiates the notion that this was anything but a bureaucratic process," Republicans in Congress believed otherwise.

"We are now seeing this list get broader and broader ... This is a very serious breach of security matter," said Republican Senator Rick Santorum.

In a separate development, FBI agent Dennis Seulimbrene, who conducted a background check on Mr. Livingstone for his White House job, told a Senate investigative panel Tuesday that the suspended official had lied during his interviews.

Lying to any federal agency is a crime punishable by up to five years in jail and $250,000 in fines, said Justice Department spokesman John Russel.

Mr. Seulimbrene, who said privacy laws prevented him from elaborating on Mr Livingstone's lies, told the Senate panel that Mr. Kennedy knew that his subordinate had lied.

Besides Mr. Marceca, the House investigative panel will also hear from Mr. Livingstone, Mr. Kennedy and former White House counsel Bernard Nussbaum.

Dole blasts Clinton policy on Europe

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Republican presidential aspirant Bob Dole Tuesday accused President Bill Clinton of "indecision, vacillation and weakness" in policy toward Europe and said this has hurt American interests.

The former Senate majority leader blasted his Democratic opponent in a major foreign policy speech one day before Mr. Clinton leaves for a summit of world leaders in Lyon, France.

"America's interests are as compelling and as urgent as they were before the Berlin Wall was breeched by the stronger forces of human yearning," Sen. Dole told several hundred people at the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia.

"Yet President Clinton has persistently deferred to our allies and to Russians, subordinating American interests to the interests of a dubious or ineffective consensus," he added.

"That's not leadership," Sen. Dole said. "And that has harmed the interests of all of us — Russian, European and American alike."

In his speech, Sen. Dole called for the enlargement of NATO and said he would oppose any Russian "veto of its expansion." He said Mr. Clinton has no policy for pulling out U.S. troops sent to Bosnia to implement a peace agreement.

In Washington, Vice President Al Gore summoned reporters to his office to respond, saying Sen. Dole sounded "Wistful for the cold war" but otherwise seemed in broad terms to agree with Mr. Clinton's policy toward a deliberate expansion of NATO and NATO policy toward Russia.

Mr. Gore insisted that Mr. Clinton plans to stick to a timetable for bringing out U.S. troops from Bosnia starting in December.

"We believe the mission will be successfully completed," he told reporters.

Sen. Dole also said he hoped Russian President Boris Yeltsin wins an election runoff with Communist rival Gennady Zyuganov, but accused Russia of "a campaign of subversion, intimidation and economic blackmail against other independent states of the former Soviet Union."

Sen. Dole said that he would reinforce the independence of states of the former Soviet Union if elected U.S. president.

The Republican presidential hopeful met Monday in New York with the visiting presidents of the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Tuesday's speech was Sen. Dole's second major attack on Mr. Clinton's foreign policy in as many months. Sen. Dole on May 9 delivered a scathing attack on Mr. Clinton's policy toward Asia, especially its stance toward China, in much the same words.

"With the end of the cold war, we should be building firm foundations for a century of peace, fulfilling the promise of a new future for Europe," Sen. Dole said. "Instead, Bill Clinton's policy of indecision, vacillation and weakness is making the world a more dangerous place. And we are missing an opportunity that may never come again."

In his Philadelphia speech, Sen. Dole singled out Mr. Clinton's policies toward Bosnia as an example of what he called a "failure of leadership."

"After haphazardly getting into Bosnia, the president has no idea how to get Americans out or how to accomplish the mission they went to fulfil," Sen. Dole said.



Republican presidential challenger Bob Dole (right) talks with Cardinal John O'Connor outside St. Patrick's Cathedral before a meeting in Card. O'Connor's residence in New York Tuesday. Card. O'Connor, a fervent foe of abortion, said he was satisfied with Sen. Dole's stand on the abortion issue (Reuter photo)

Solana rebuffs calls to speed NATO expansion

WASHINGTON (R) — NATO Secretary General Javier Solana Tuesday rebuffed calls by Bob Dole and other Republicans for quicker expansion of the Western alliance and said the organisation was on track to decide on new members in 1997.

Showing no reluctance to confront an issue popping up in the U.S. presidential campaign, Mr. Solana told defence writers that NATO expansion was on course.

"It's a consensus among the 16 allies and I think we should maintain that consensus, (as well as) the speed," he said.

The former Spanish foreign minister also came as close as any official has to clearly identifying Poland as among the first candidates which deserved admittance to the alliance.

NATO in 1994 set a course for expanding its borders eastward into the former Soviet Bloc and will decide at a meeting of alliance foreign ministers in December when to admit new members, Mr. Solana said.

"My feeling is that in 1997 a decision will be taken" on what new members to accept, he added.

Sen. Dole, the Republican Party's expected presidential nominee, has launched a fierce attack on the foreign policy record of his Democratic rival, President Bill Clinton.

Before retiring recently as Senate majority leader to campaign full-time, Sen. Dole sponsored a non-binding sense-of-Congress resolution that supports faster NATO expansion and cites Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic — the widely accepted leading candidates for NATO membership — as having made progress in meeting the criteria for admission.

Mr. Solana, who recently visited Eastern and Central European countries seeking to join NATO, said none of them were pushing for a faster timetable. "I don't have any feel of urgency," he said.

Efforts to curb greenhouse gases are too slow — EU

LUXEMBOURG (R) — European Union environment ministers said Wednesday global efforts to curb greenhouse gases were too slow.

A statement agreed by ministers ahead of a United Nations climate change meeting next month said U.N.-backed talks to cut emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases were "not advancing as needed".

Ministers said stabilising atmospheric concentrations of CO_2 at twice the pre-industrial levels "will eventually require global emissions to be less than 50 per cent of current levels of emissions."

Even then, average global temperatures were likely to rise two degrees centigrade relative to those before industrialisation began, they said.

Carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, along with gases such as methane from farm animals, paddy fields and waste dumps, reduce the solar radiation reflected back by the Earth into space, increasing the atmosphere's natural greenhouse effect.

Scientists have predicted that relatively small changes in average temperature will not only raise sea levels but will also spark more extreme weather changes in the form of longer, harsher droughts, more violent storms and heavier rains.

After several hours of talks, ministers backed the idea of "significant overall reductions of greenhouse gas emissions after the year 2000 below 1990 levels" but without setting specific targets.

Officials said ministers became ensnared in talks about how to calculate and share out cuts between the bloc's 15 countries.

They said France further confused the issue by pushing for cuts to be based on CO_2 emissions per capita, an approach which would have favoured the country with its extensive nuclear industry.

"It would have been better if we had had some proposals with numbers in them but the confusion was too great," German Environment Minister Angela Merkel told Reuters after the talks.

Nevertheless she was optimistic about the chance of progress at next month's U.N. climate change talks in Switzerland.

"I think we can survive with this in Geneva," she said.

The ministers' decision is sure to disappoint climate campaigners, who had called for an EU commitment to cut CO_2 emissions by 20 per cent on 1990 levels by the year 2005.

They're changing to green at Buckingham Palace

LONDON (R) — Ener[gy] saving measures at B[ritain's] royal palaces are to save taxpayers th[ousands] of pounds a year as well as curbing pollution, a report published Tues[day] said. The report from the Royal Household to pa[rlia]ment said governm[ent] spending on the pala[ces] totalled £20.4 mil[lion] ($31.4 million) last y[ear] little changed from the [pre]vious year. But it said [offi]cials were making str[en]uous efforts to reduce [costs] by going green. A [com]bined heat and power [plant] has already been inst[alled] in Buckingham Pal[ace], Queen Elizabeth's Lon[don] residence, and new [ones] planned for Wind[sor] Castle, her country h[ome] west of the capital. T[he]ther they should cut [elec]tricity costs by £70,00[0] report said. Further en[ergy] saving measures h[ave] reduced the lighting le[vel] Buckingham Palace [to] 57,000 watts. And gas [used] by the Royal House[hold] fell 23 per cent last [year] thanks to better insula[tion], modification of boiler[s], the fitting of light sen[sors] to operate 19th centur[y] lamps outside the var[ious] palaces. Heir to the th[rone] Prince Charles is a k[nown] environmentalist

Mystery collect[or] boosts London [art] market

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Astronauts call[ed] home as marathon mission continues

CAPE CANAVERAL, [Flo]rida (R) — Astron[auts] aboard the shuttle Col[umbia] took the afternoon [off] to relax and chat with [fa]milies five days into [the] mission which Nas[a] hopes will be the long[est] shuttle flight ever. [The] crew, which includes [a] medical doctors, a wo[man] and astronauts r[epre]senting the French [and] Canadian space agenc[ies] were given a half-[day] break from research [to] study the effects of space [on] the human body. [The] numbers seven astronau[ts] hope to stay in space [for] nearly 17 days

Major urges Diana to accept settlement — dail[y]

LONDON (R) — Br[itish] Prime Minister John M[ajor] has urged Princess Dian[a] accept a multimill[ion] pound settlement for [a] divorce from Prince Char[les] the Sun reported Brita[in's] best selling tabloid said [on] Major made the plea [in a] 45-minute meeting w[ith] the princess at her [Lon]don home Princess Dian[a] has been embroiled in [a] bitter divorce battle with [her] husband since [she] agreed to end their [14-]year marriage earlier this [year]. The Sun said Buckingh[am] Palace had sent Mr. Ma[jor] details of the proposed [set]tlement, believed to [be] about £20 million ($30 [mil]lion) and to include [a] lump sum and to include [a] annual income and pro[per]ties and expenses

Jordan Times

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Acts of rage and despair

THE SHADOW of fear and violence that still hangs over the Middle East was felt painfully yesterday with the bombing that killed 19 people and wounded many more in a military base in Saudi Arabia and the killing of three Israeli soldiers by an unidentified group.

As we join the rest of the world in condemning the two operations, as all acts of violence and terror should be condemned and fought, we have to think of who the perpetrators are and shed light on what they want to achieve. In every likelihood there is a common thread, or a commonality of interest, tying the motives, if not the perpetrators themselves, of the two attacks. In this context, we believe that the peace process in the Middle East, and the regional order that is emerging as a result of its progress and development is the real target of the two acts.

While it is true that a clear vision for dealing with the roots of violence and a clear, internationally accepted definition of terrorism are still missing from the political dictionary of today's world, we feel that what has transpired at the Sharm Al Sheikh international conference and more recently the Cairo Arab summit could give us a clue to what the terrorists want and what they are really after.

There is no doubt that the attack on the Israeli soldiers will affect the peace process. It could push Israel towards adopting an even more hardline position on the negotiations with the inevitable result of causing more hardships for Israelis and Arabs alike. But past experience has proven that increased security and punitive measures are no shield against violence. The only viable way of stemming violence is the attainment of progress in the peace talks. Experience too has shown that there has been a clear trade off between peace and violence.

Israel's new prime minister is insisting that there can be no peace without security, that "terrorism is incompatible with peace." But, U.S. secretary of state was right to remind him that there can be no security without peace either. And there can be no peace without an end to occupation and the usurpation of other people's rights.

As for the bloody bombing in Saudi Arabia, it is a clear indication that extremists are on the rise in the Arab Gulf which had traditionally enjoyed internal stability and security. Some might argue that there can be no stability in the whole of the Middle East unless peoples democratic rights and freedoms are respected and institutionalised. But it is clear that certain countries in the region have *adopted terrorism as a means to achieve their* political goals. That is why the bombing in Dhahran must be thoroughly investigated. If it is proven that other state(s) had a hand in the operation, not just through direct involvement in the attack but also through spreading beliefs and ideologies that promote violence, collective action should be taken against it or them. This is a responsibility that the countries of the region should not shun.

What is also needed to guard against future regional instability is to work together to address the economic imbalances that carry the potential of creating regional upheavals in terms of economic mass migrations and economically motivated unrest. So far, the Middle East has not only been torn by ethnic and nationalistic strife, it has also witnessed the slowest economic growth rates in the whole world.

The only way to protect our area from future turbulence is to make it a better, more peaceful and prosperous region with close channels of coordination, communication and cooperation among its various states. This, and not transient, short-lived reactions to bloody and tragic events, is the right path to ridding the Middle East from the consequences of fanaticism and despair.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MUNES AL Razzaz, a writer for **Al Ra'i**, Wednesday expressed dismay over the lack of will on the part of the ruling Baathist regimes in Syria and Iraq to come together and confront common challenges. It is the right of the Arab people to ask why these two countries, which are supposedly ruled by Baath parties and claim to have common goals, fail to coordinate their efforts to achieve them, said the writer. Baghdad and Damascus do not only face common challenges and dangers, they also have been targeted by common enemies throughout the past years, said the writer. Before the second Gulf war Iraq coordinated its stand with Kuwait while Syria coordinated its position with that of Saudi Arabia, but the two neighbouring states were adamant against joint coordination of their stands at the regional or the international levels in order to deal with urgent questions and threats posed to them and the whole Arab Nation, continued the writer. After the camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel, Baghdad and Damascus declared their readiness to come together and join hands for common goals, but only one month afterwards they split apart once again and achieved nothing, said the writer. He said the future Arab generations will not have mercy on their ancestors who are not only impotent vis-à-vis the dangers facing them but also lack the will power to arrive at a minimum level of solidarity to protect their own interests.

The View from Academia

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

The Arab summit, the new Israeli government and international legitimacy

MUCH CAN be said, and positively so, about the historic Arab summit concluded in Cairo a few days ago and about its actual and potential impact: the healthy spirit which prevailed throughout, the swiftness and efficiency with which the many complex matters were dealt with, the apt realisation of the nature and scope of the obstacles and threats to regional security and the causes and sources of such threats and obstacles, the clarity and firmness with which the final communiqué spells out the unanimous Arab position vis-à-vis the various issues which concern the overall Arab family, the healthy attitude and approach to Arab-Arab concerns and relations, etc.

One point I wish to emphasise here, however: the Arab determination to work within international legitimacy.

A careful reading of the summit's final declaration reveals, in the clearest terms possible, the Arab commitment to solving the various conflicts within the region on the basis of international law and international legitimacy. This notion is underscored in connection with the occupied Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territories, as well as with the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) three islands, the Yemeni-Eritrean conflict, Iraq, etc.

With respect to occupied Palestinian territories, the Golan Heights and South Lebanon, the summit has called (for example) for the implementation of U.N. resolutions 242, 338, and 425. As for the Israeli settlements in occupied Arab land, the communiqué says: The Arab leaders "affirm their commitment to international resolutions wiping out any recognition of the situation resulting from the Israeli settlements on occupied Arab lands because it is an illegal measure, null and void." Regarding Israeli nuclear weapons, the communiqué calls on Israel "to adhere to the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty and place its nuclear installations under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency."

On the three UAE islands, the summit calls on Iran to "end its occupation of the three islands and to stop its policy of imposing faits accomplis on these islands and to follow peaceful means to solve the dispute, conforming to the principles of international law, including appeals to the International Court of Justice."

The declaration, while supporting and safeguarding the unity of Iraq, calls on the Iraqi government to "continue to implement all the Security Council resolutions." Expressing their relief over the signing of the "accord of principles" between Yemen and Eritrea, the Arab leaders urge the two countries to "submit their conflict to international arbitration."

It is obvious from all these citations that: a) Arab countries both respect and abide by international resolutions, agreements and institutions and b) they are consistent in expecting themselves and others to respect and abide by such resolutions, agreements and institutions.

They are committed to implementing resolutions 242 and 338, they expect Yemen and Eritrea to seek international legal opinion, they expect Iraq to fulfill its commitments to the Security Council, they expect Iran to resolve the conflict with the UAE through the International Court of Justice and, naturally, they expect (and ought to expect) Israel to resume the peace process on the basis of U.N. resolutions and subsequent agreements.

What is so unreasonable, threatening and subversive about Arab respect and faith in international legitimacy and will? Why is the new Israeli government upset with the Arab summit's final declaration? Does not Israel, nay should not Israel, expect itself to work within the dictates of international legitimacy and abide by its resolutions?

The Arab countries will go down in history as among the few countries in the world which have always abided by and revered international legitimacy.

Since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arab countries have done nothing but seek restoration of rights and redress of wounds through international legal bodies and fora.

For most of its history, by contrast, Israel has done its best to function outside the domain of international legitimacy; in many cases, it has violated international law, resolutions and agreements flagrantly. How come it refuses, until now, to subject its nuclear facilities to international inspection? Why has Netanyahu avoided any explicit, clearcut commitment to the resumption of the peace process on the basis of agreements and declarations signed between the former Israeli government and the Arab side and on the basis of U.N. resolutions?

Rabin and Peres have somewhat significantly improved the image of Israel globally in the past few years and have won themselves and their country a significant degree of international approval and acclaim (i.e. peace prizes, new relations and agreements with countries they had no relations or agreements with before, etc.) precisely because they have come close to making Israel work within the realm of international legitimacy.

It is to be remembered here that the agreements signed between Israel and Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians, and Israel and Jordan are based on international resolutions.

What does the new Israeli government intend to do in this respect? So far, its position is not clear. It may be, of course, that it needs some time to crystallise its position and declare its intentions more coherently; but it may also be that it plans on continuing to work without the umbrella of international legitimacy.

Netanyahu's statements regarding the resumption of the peace process are to date very unassuring: they are too general, unclear and uncommitted. What does he mean when he wants no prior conditions? Have not there been agreements signed on the basis of international law? Have not conditions been agreed upon already between Israel and the Arab side? Does he want to take us back to square one? Does he want to resolve the conflict (to his own liking) outside the sphere of interbational law and subsequent Arab-Israeli agreements?

One wishes to remind the new Israeli government, as the summit's communiqué has reminded it, that: any deviation from the agreements and declaration of principles with the Arab side is unethical, unreasonable, unwise and even unlawful; the refusal to recognise East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and South Lebanon as occupied territories is in violation of international law and resolutions; the attempt to consolidate the existing Israeli settlements in occupied Arab territory, to expand them or to build new ones is illegal.

One of the most impressive things about the Arab summit's final declaration is the clear and coherent Arab position on peace with Israel. Is such crystallisation or such clarity a vice? Is it what ultimately scares Netanyahu, who has not yet crystallised and made clear his own position on peace? Or is it the Arab respect and commitment to *international legitimacy* and peace agreements that scare him and the expectation on part of the Arabs for everyone else in the region (Israel included) to respect and abide by the international will? Does the new Israeli government plan to join hands with those in the region who want to live and let live in accordance with the law, or does it not? The future only will tell.

For Hong Kong, a year to go and counting

By Diane Stormont
Reuter

HONG KONG — In little over a year, the British flag comes down and Hong Kong once again becomes a part of China.

For Beijing, the handover at midnight on June 30, 1997, ends over 150 years of humiliation at the hands of occupying barbarians. China's ageing leaders have declared a two-day holiday and celebrations to mark the British departure.

Will Hong Kong people cheerfully come to the party? Tens of thousands will not. They have left.

Others have insurance in the form of a foreign passport tucked away or a child sent abroad to establish residency.

Around 60,000 people quietly pack up and emigrate each year rather than face the prospect of being handed over to an authoritarian government so many risked their lives to flee.

The exodus continues, but the majority of Hong Kong's six million people living on borrowed time in a borrowed place have no option other than to hope for the best.

With just a year to go, the omens are mixed for those peering anxiously into the future.

Both Beijing and London clearly want hong kong's astonishing success story to continue. When Britain promised in 1984 to return its wealthy, vibrant colony, China in turn promised freedoms that would be unthinkable on the mainland.

"China does not want anyone to be able to say that hong kong was one of the world's great success stories under british rule, and then went down the tubes as soon as China took over," wrote Richard Margolis, a former British diplomat involved in the negotiations and now with Merrill Lynch.

Hence, Chinese patriarch deng xiaoping's one country, two systems formula which promises hong kong considerable political and economic independence.

Hong Kong people and not Communist Party cadres from Beijing — and certainly not from neighbouring Guangzhou (Canton) — will run the place. Hong Kong will maintain its independent economy and capitalist way of life for 50 years.

These pledges appear to satisfy Hong Kong's powerful business elite which has been assiduously courted by China.

Some of Hong Kong's most prominent tycoons have been rewarded for their support with appointments to China's powerful, hand-picked preparatory committee charged with ensuring a smooth transition and shaping Hong Kong's first post-1997 administration.

"Such are the disparities between China and Hong Kong that expressions such as democracy, elections and press freedom mean very different things to Hong Kong people and to the Chinese government."

"I think if you were to force a universal referendum in Hong Kong — everybody must vote — I tell you they will vote for a good job and a good standard of living before the ability to vote," said Paul Cheng, a pro-business legislator and member of the preparatory committee elite.

A long-term study into the transition conducted by Hong Kong's Baptist University reached a different conclusion.

"They (Hong Kong people) are not so concerned about the economic aspects as political stability and personal freedoms," said political scientist Michael Degolyer who directs the study.

Such are the disparities between China and Hong Kong that expressions such as democracy, elections and press freedom "mean very different things to Hong Kong people and to the Chinese government," said pro-Beijing politician Tsang Yok-Sing.

Hong Kong's 12-year transition has been a turbulent one so far with London and Beijing frequently at loggerheads, most pointedly over the electoral reforms spearheaded by Hong Kong's 28th and probably last British governor, Chris Patten.

By any standards the reforms were modest. They were a response to strident demands that reached fever pitch in the wake of China's bloody crackdown on its own pro-democracy movement in 1989, an event seared into Hong Kong's collective memory.

The pro-democracy lobby, which grew out of the shattered illusions following the crackdown, was not mollified.

But China exploded in fury. The reformed legislature goes the moment the British leave. In its place, an appointed interim body will serve for a year or so until elections are held under a format that meet's Beijing's approval.

Hong Kong's human rights laws, another product of patten's stewardship, would be watered down.

"They were always deeply, deeply suspicious of the slightest change proposed by us," said a former senior Hong Kong government official who took part in a numbing series of negotiations when China objected to a new Hong Kong airport.

"They were convinced that all we wanted to do was to empty the kitty by dumping the reserves in the harbour.

"Patten's reforms seemed to confirm their suspicions the British were determined to sabotage Hong Kong because we had been forced to give it up," said the official.

Mr. Margolis, recalling Sino-British talks in the early 1980s, said China was not prepared for much social change in Hong Kong, let alone the emergence of a politically-savvy middle class.

"the British side made it clear that Hong Kong could not be frozen socially and politically for 13 years, but that point was never explicitly accepted by the Chinese government."

The democracy movement is expected to protest with its usual vigour. It was pointedly excluded from the preparatory committee and is suspicious China plans to use the provisional legislature's brief tenure to snuff out cherished freedoms.

Some have talked of occupying the legislative chamber, others of street demonstrations.

Much then hinges on how Beijing, which is not used to being so rudely challenged, responds, and how Hong Kong, grown used to London's long leash, reacts.

Degolyer sees the handover itself as the critical point, when the dangers of a disastrous clash are at their highest.

"The possibility for events to spiral rapidly out of control in circumstances of darkness, high emotions, low trust, and official uncertainty cannot and should not be underestimated," he said.

LETTERS

Fiat on women

To the Editor:

Mufti Al Baz of Saudi Arabia stated recently in a press release, that work for women and their subsequent interaction with men is one of the greatest means leading to adultery.

No one, to my knowledge, responded to this statement, except for Dr. Zeid Hamzah in a short article in Al Ra'i, "Defending women's honour" (June 20, 1996).

Dr. Hamzah stated that he did not wish to counter the mufti's declaration with a religious argument, as he was leaving that to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, to the Islamic Chief Justices, the muftis of Arab and Islamic countries, Islamic colleges and last, but not least, Islamic parties. However, he did urge all women activists, organisations and unions to raise their voices and defend the honour and dignity of women. He concluded by saying that if women did not do so, their silence will either signify acceptance or cowardice.

I cannot choose the latter option and would like to add my voice to that of Dr. Hamzah's. I appeal to the office of the prime minister to request that our Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs release a statement countering that of Mufti Al Baz's and hope that women all over Jordan and the Arab World will speak out against this travesty.

Nadine Shubailat,
Amman.

At the helm of the world

To the Editor:

An intriguing connection can be made between the recent news reports concerning the United Nations' standoff involving its weapons inspectors in Iraq and the debate over selecting the next United Nations secretary-general.

While the current secretary-general has been one of the U.N.'s most articulate spokespersons over its 50-year history, Boutros Ghali will be remembered as one of its least effective and most maligned leaders. As a result of this perception, the world community's appraisal of his efforts to address the U.N.'s various crises is by and large negative. Nonetheless, the U.N. has not been without its successes.

The reports from Baghdad highlight one person chiefly responsible for a recent triumph of U.N. diplomacy: the chairman of the U.N. special commission for Iraq, Sweden's Rolf Ekeus.

Given the acrimonious debate over the reappointment of Dr. Ghali — as well as the handful of proposed successors whose support seems based on narrowly defined geographic and gender-based considerations — perhaps it is time the U.N. membership considered a person uniquely qualified to address the organisation's crises.

Many share the view that reforming the U.N. will not be accomplished without the leadership of a reform-minded insider. Certainly the U.N.'s fiscal crisis will not be resolved without a secretary-general largely supported by the U.S. delegation. But, ultimately, the U.N. needs a tough-minded diplomat unafraid to face down the organisation's problems and critics. The world community deserves a strong leader at the United Nations.

The courage Mr. Ekeus displays as he stands "toe to toe" with the Iraqi regime strikes the right chord as we debate the future of the United Nations' leadership.

Rex Prestone Stoner,
P. O. Box 815473,
Amman.

Society on the Move

Going into double time in high gear

It is true. Asaad Abdul Rahman, the Director General of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation and most recently a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's Executive Committee, has now accepted Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's offer to become a minister in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). The question is which ministerial portfolio will he occupy. More than one post would appear to suit Dr. Abdul Rahman's inclinations: that of tourism and antiquities, or information. Tourism and antiquities is already in the hands of Elias Freij, who is reported to be in ill health. Insiders say Mr. Freij may opt for minister without portfolio and thus open the way for Dr. Abdul Rahman to take on a job that could oversee a genuine "bread and butter" industry for the PNA. Another possibility is the splitting of the information and culture ministry [illegible] held by Yasser Abed Rabbo who is said to be concentrating on cultural issues. Should that be the case, Dr. Abdul Rahman could take on a ministry that here in Jordan is slated for a phase-out. Still another possibility is housing. Meanwhile the Shoman Foundation will not be losing a director general but gaining a new board of trustees member when the good Dr. assumes his PNA office. The institution prides itself in having cultivated a capable internal cadre and a decentralised system requiring minimal supervision. What Dr. Abdul Rahman may take on there as well is a "part-time" post as supervisor general. So there may be no need to find a new director general. How, you may be asking, will the PNA minister-designate be able to wear all those hats? First of all, his wife Mai and their five children will remain in Amman, and therefore much of his time will continue to be spent Jordan-side. Second, you must not know Dr. Abdul Rahman — he loves to wear "hats." Wherever the chips fall, we wish him good luck.

A MAN OF YOUTH: *Issam Arida has clinched the job he is said to have always wanted, that is, secretary general of the Ministry of Youth. Mr. Arida has for most of the past 26 years been director general of Al Hussein Youth City. A few years after his 1970 appointment he wore a second hat as director of the Royal Cultural Centre for about one year. He went off to direct Jordan Radio for a short time and even tried his hand at the former government-owned daily Al Shaab. But this youthful, 50-something public servant's heart has always been with promoting the progress of the nation's youth and that, he says, is precisely what he intends to continue doing. A name hotly being circulated to take Mr. Arida's place at the Youth City is Basel Abdul Wahab Majali, who, for the past six months, has been general manager of the ministry's Youth Department for the Amman Governorate. Prior to that, Mr. Majali, son of the late Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Wahab Majali, was manager of the Youth Department in Karak Governorate. Another name which has surfaced is that of someone with Majali connections of his own, that is as former special advisor to former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and now advisor to Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali, both, incidentally, uncles of Basel Majali. Mr. Shahin may be better recognised as the presenter of "Na'am Sahih" (Yes, that's right), a popular Jordan Television quiz show. What we are told from officialdom is that while the formality of a Royal Decree sealing Mr. Arida's appointment is not yet a fait accompli, the naming of his successor at Youth City would be premature.*

HE REMEMBERS WELL: *In Amman for a one-day "take-stock" trip that includes other countries of the region was John Shepherd, director for the Middle East at the British Foreign Office, and thus responsible for relations across the Maghreb through the Gulf to Iraq and Iran. He has only been with the Foreign Office on this stint for six months. Earlier Mr. Shepherd was deputy chief of mission in Bonn, and during the Gulf crisis he was ambassador to Bahrain. His very first job was here in Jordan as political officer in the embassy's former location at Jabal Amman's Third Circle. He jokes that as a bachelor in those days he had a flat inside the embassy — allowing for little privacy. He's married now. Arriving early Tuesday morning, Mr. Shepherd met with senior Jordanian officials to get a snapshot of the Jordanian situation with regard to the Israeli elections and the Benyamin Netanyahu win, and the Arab summit in Cairo. During lunch and dinner hosted by Deputy Chief of Mission Simon Collis and Ambassador Peter Hinchcliffe he met with senior members of the press and several public and private sector officials. His official meetings included a stop at the Prime Ministry to see Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, and at the Central Bank of Jordan where he met with Governor Ziad Fariz. Not back in Jordan for more than 20 years, Mr. Shepherd left Wednesday morning.*



Jordanian truck driver Wael Fayoumi and his Israeli counterpart Tal Vaaknin Wednesday shake hands at the northern border crossing of Sheikh Hussein Bridge where they were the first truckers to cross the borders, putting into the works the bilateral agreement on overland transport of goods between Jordan and Israel (photo by Tawfiq Taji)

SO, WHO'S THE NEW NEIGHBOUR? *Israel's national airline, EL AL, opened for business with a big bang celebration at the Philadelphia Hotel Sunday night. In fact, the guest list was somewhat similar to the one the Israeli embassy in Amman used for Israel's independence day celebrations. The turnout for the travel and hospitality industry revelry, however, far surpassed the Independence Day event which coincided with the Israeli military attacks against Lebanon. Not on the guest list, though, was Ahmad Abbas, owner of the commercial building where El Al has set up shop. Mr. Abbas, a successful businessman with enterprises in Jordan and elsewhere, built a JD 5 million, five-storey, commercial building in Shmeisani with space large enough for 24 separate offices. He has, in his business, leased space to individual airlines and to travel agencies who represent several international airways. So it was not unusual for him to lease space to another government-registered travel agency by the name of 5 Continents. What came as a surprise to Mr. Abbas, according to a Middle East Broadcasting news report by Amman bureau chief Saad Silawi, is that the 5 Continents agency, owned by Mitri Twal, a long-time travel industry professional, is, in fact, the general sales agent for El Al. On the MBC news programme Mr. Abbas preferred anonymity and refused to go on camera, saying that he was strictly interested in the commercial aspects of this issue. Contacted by the Jordan Times, however, both Messrs. Abbas and Twal declined comment, and El Al General Manager for Jordan Salah Nabhan was unavailable. It would appear that on all sides the parties hope that the controversy of "who knew what and when" will just fade away and everyone can get back to business.*

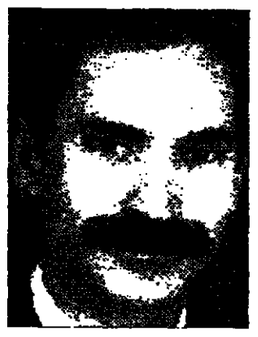
MEETING THE COMPETITION: *And it was business, and particularly Royal Jordanian business, and how it would fare in light of air fare competition from El Al, that was again on the minds of many. But according to Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi, the fear of competition from El Al is unwarranted. Mr. Lawzi said that the numbers (passengers and flights) between Amman and Tel Aviv on both Royal Wings (the Jordanian short-distance airline now flying to Tel Aviv) and El Al are limited by the bilateral transport agreement between Jordan and Israel. "El Al is just one more competitor, not the only competitor," said Mr. Lawzi. He said the conditions of the agreement limit each carrier to 250 passengers per week, thus 1,000 passengers per month for each. Jordan's airports, now annually handle 1.4 million in total passenger traffic, said Mr. Lawzi, so the addition of El Al as a competitor does not account for a significant volume. Besides, he said, RJ covers most of the in-demand European routes, so there would be little advantage for a passenger having to travel from Amman to Tel Aviv to catch an El Al flight to those destinations. And on the Far East routes, he said, Royal Jordanian can aggressively compete with low rate fares.*

CALL THE CATERER! *Returning to the El Al inaugural festivities, which were preceded by a press conference at which visiting Israeli Minister of Transport Itzhak Levy spoke in Hebrew through an English translator, Israel's famous peace singer Haya Samir performed in Hebrew and Arabic. During the evening the Israeli Peace Dance Troupe jumped to their feet to show off some fancy footwork, but when they stomped into a dabkeh, some Jordanians just could not help raise their eyebrows. This was all lost on Minister Levy who as a rabbi and member of the National Religious Party does not partake in such entertainment — he opted to stay in another room for this part of the evening. There was also a bit of a culinary snafu when the menu revealed that main course was non-kosher steak and dessert was even less kosher chocolate trifle (or triffle as the hotel prefers to spell it). Many of the steaks were returned.*

TALK ABOUT LONG-SHOTS: *Well it appears that prominent businessman Osama Shasha, recently appointed to the Amman Municipal Council, was way out of the league in the run for the deputy mayoral post left vacant by Talaat Nawaiseh. Elections by the council, which is made up of 20 appointed members and 20 elected members, resulted in a win for Nidal Hadid an engineer and son of Senator Bergess Hadid. Mr. Hadid won 23 votes of the 36 ballots cast. Also-rans were Omar Lawzi (6 votes), Mawloud Sober (4 votes) and Abdul Hamid Adwan (3 votes).*

JORDAN IN 36 HOURS: *From the U.S., Near-East South-Asia Public Affairs Advisor at the State Department John Hamilton was in Amman this week for only a day and a half on his first visit to Jordan, also as part of a regional familiarisation tour. Mr. Hamilton stuck with the press for his information, meeting with among others, Al Dustour Chief Editor Nabil Sharif. There were no meetings scheduled with government officials. Mr. Hamilton left Amman for Cairo yesterday.*

OFF ON A MISSION: *The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Amman is hosting two Jordanian volunteers for its Camp Sadako Programme which provides assistance to refugees in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, Mexico and Nepal. The two men selected from a list of nominations from various non-governmental organisations in Jordan are Awad Abu Darweesh and Ashraf Amin Khassawneh, who will be working for four weeks in separate camps in Kenya. The young men were scheduled to leave today (Thursday) for Nairobi via Cairo. Mr. Abu*



Awad Abu Darweesh



Ashraf Amin Khassawneh

Darweesh has been director of first aid training at the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) for the past two years. He studied psychology at the University of Jordan and later took courses at the National Health Service in the U.K. where he was certified as a first aid and ambulance aid instructor in 1989. He came home to work for the Civil Defence Department before taking up his post at JNRCS. Mr. Darweesh is married and has two daughters and two sons. Mr. Khassawneh is a political science graduate of the University of Jordan and a 1995 recipient of the Crown Prince Award. Currently looking for work, the 22-year-old Mr. Khassawneh said he would like to enter the foreign service. According to UNHCR, the main objectives of the Camp Sadako Programme are to promote awareness of the plight of the refugees and challenge stereotypes by according several young people the opportunity to have a concrete and first hand experience in the context of a refugee camp and to expand awareness on refugee issues and the work of UNHCR through local press articles on the volunteers' experiences. The UNHCR has no refugee camps in Jordan; the Palestinian refugee camps here have been serviced by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). A UNHCR statement said, "Jordan's participation in this highly acclaimed forum is yet another recognition of Jordan's unflinching support to the refugee cause and unswerving commitment to the refugee programmes." The two volunteers credit UNHCR Representative in Amman Zobida Ashagrie, with exerting every effort so that Jordan would be part of the more than 80 volunteers from 25 countries to lend a hand in the Camp Sadako Programme. Mr. Abu Darweesh will be in Dadaab, and Mr. Khassawneh will be in KaKuma. We look forward to their safe return home.

MAGNETIC APPEAL: *This year's Third World Academy of Sciences Award for Young Jordanian Scientists (TWAS) is being shared by two physicists who both earned their bachelors of science at Yarmouk University but went separate ways to continue their education towards the Ph.D. Abdel Latif Sharif and Mahdi Salem Lataifeh are both employed at Muta University: Dr. Sharif is assistant dean of the Faculty of Science, and Dr. Lataifeh is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics. The TWAS award is usually presented to one recipient in each country participating in the competition. This year the panel of judges found the work of these two physicists worth joint recognition. They will share the $2000 award and the honour for their individual work on magnetism and magnetic material performed here and in the U.K. over the past three years. There was some overlapping in their work, particularly as the two are long time colleagues and are now both at Muta. According to panel chairman Homam Ghassib, who presented the men with their awards, "their persistence and even doggedness was much admired by the panel of judges. An "attractive" accomplishment.*

Jennifer Hamarneh

Once a proud luxury of the Arab World, Damascus' baths are vanishing

By Anthony Shadid
The Associated Press

DAMASCUS — With only a towel wrapped around his waist, Ibrahim Homsi stands idly next to a bubbling fountain at Hammam Sheik Raslan, one of the few remaining public baths in Damascus.

Forty years ago, he began earning his living as a "mu-kayyis," a bath attendant who scrubs down customers with a horse-hair sponge that fits his hand like a glove.

Those were the glory days of Damascus' public baths, architectural splendors that were a fixture of the city's traditional life. They were the site of bachelor parties, women's outings, even family picnics.

Today, the skill that Mr. Homsi, his father and his grandfather practised is no longer much in demand. The once-numerous "hammamat," or bath houses, are steadily vanishing as centuries-old traditions give way to modern indoor plumbing, allowing most Damascus residents to bathe at home.

"There's nothing else I can do," Homsi, 58, said during a long break. "But there's not that much work to do anymore." His income depends solely on tips, which run 50 to 100 Syrian lira, or $1 to $2.

About two dozen public baths remain in Damascus, down from as many as 100 in the early years of the century when Syria was part of the Ottoman Empire. Some are falling into disrepair and others visited only rarely.

Before World War II, popular baths would draw 80 customers a day in the winter and 40 in the summer, historians say. Now, a dozen customers is a busy day.

"All the old aspects of life are changing, the baths, the old markets," said Yasser Qassem, a 21-year-old soldier who stopped for a bath at the renovated 800-year-old Hammam Nur Al Din. "The bath is like a museum. You enter it and you go back to the old days of Damascus."

Through its more than 4,000 years of history, Damascus has been famous for its plentiful water in an otherwise dry region. It grew up around an oasis created by the Barada River, which rushes out of a nearby mountain gorge.

For men, the bath houses were a place to pass hours in the evening, especially in the winter. Some baths attracted only certain professions: Farmers, artisans or Persian pilgrims visiting Shi'ite Muslim religious shrines in the city.

On the day before weddings, grooms would gather with friends, bringing food and sometimes a drum or flute.

Women sought out the baths as a refuge, one of the few places they could go without their husbands in a conservative Muslim society. They might spend much of the day with their children in the steam-filled rooms, vast stone chambers lit by coloured glass tiles in the roof.

They prepared dishes made from lentils, cracked wheat and yogurt. Some would colour their hair dark red with henna. Tradition dictated visits before a wedding and 40 days after childbirth.

"For women, the bath was the occasion to go out, spend the whole day outside the house and meet other women in the quarter," said Sarab Atassi, a researcher at the French Institute in Damascus. "It was perhaps more important for women than men."

The routine remains much the same as centuries ago, with the addition of modern amenities like saunas, sho-wers and massages. The works costs about 175 lira, or about $3.50. At Ham-mam Nur Al Din, for instance, a bath runs 100 lira, a sauna 50 lira, a massage 20 lira and tea 10 lira.

Male customers shed their clothes, then wrap a thin towel around their waist. An attendant provides a rough sponge and soap, and the customer washes himself over an ornate, stone basin.

In another room, the "mu-kayyis" uses his horse-hair mitt to scrub the entire bo-dy, diligently scraping off dead skin. The mukayyis then gives a rubdown.

A sauna is optional, followed by a rinse of cold water.

The customer then goes to the reception room, where he has five towels around him, including a tight one around the head. Under the bundle, customers sip a herbal tea and smoke a water pipe with flavoured tobacco.

"You feel like you've been pampered, taken care of and waited on," said William Rugh, a former U.S. diplomat in Syria who religiously visits the bath houses on his regular business trips to Damascus.

The Syrian government has helped restore at least eight bath houses over the past decade in an effort to attract tourists.

And the passion of bath enthusiasts may delay the inevitable — at least for a while.

At Hammam Al Malik Al Zaher, a bath in the old city built as early as the 10th century, men lounge near an arabesque fountain, splitting a bowl of beans for an afternoon meal.

"Baths are fundamental. They will never finish in old Damascus," said Abu Zaka-riyya, a 45-year-old attendant who has scrubbed customers for 30 years. "They're heritage."

A woman's memory of life in Damascus' public baths

The Associated Press

IN THE 1969 book Daughter Of Damascus, Syrian author Siham Tergeman recalled the atmosphere in Damascus' public baths of her youth as "one of pervasive well-being."

Her account:

"Over here stood a chaste bride and at that basin an old woman working henna into her hair. ... A trilling cry of joy came from the bride's chamber. A violent quarrel erupted between several women around one basin and came close to ending with a war of bath cups.

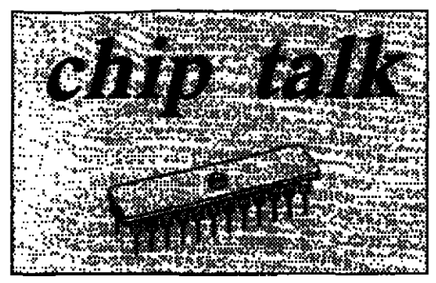
"At the neighbouring stone basin a customer sat alone with her children, enjoying the water and ignoring the problems of the others. ... A child wailed in the lap of its mother when soap got in its eyes. A woman poured several final bowls of water on her head and then washed for prayer. ... A pregnant woman passed by, walking heavily — in what appeared to be her appointed month. ...

"In the room across the way, the women were beating on bath cups and clapping with wet hands, dancing and swaying from side to side. There were loud cries from several women when a new customer entered the bath with, among her children, a boy of 10, that they demanded must leave the woman's bath.

"It's not right for him to enter the women's bath. ... He's no longer little."

Golden slumbers

By Jean-Claude Elias



BETWEEN 1990 and 1994 the computer industry showered users with innovative breakthroughs. The equipment was upgraded from 16-bit architecture to 32-bit. In plain this meant that PCs were not considered as toys anymore. The Windows operating environment got rid of most of its weaknesses, large capacity hard disk drives and memory chips became affordable and CD-ROM laser discs invaded homes and offices.

Compared to what these new machines and software could offer in terms of processing power, ease of use and versatility, computers of the eighties could be remembered as equipment from the Middle Ages.

After 1994 the introduction of new characteristics continued unabated, and the speed of change did not diminished a bit. However, the importance, the impact of the new improvements is far less significant now.

Two factors have characterised personal computing in the last two years — a drastic drop in prices and the world adoption of the Internet. As important as they can be these two elements do not affect a typical PC user as much as the changes he or she benefited from between 1990 and 1994.

After an understandable "start-up" passion for Internet, people are discovering that not everybody needs it, or has time for it. Like AutoCad and other specialised applications, more than 80 per cent of users realise they can live perfectly happy without being connected on-line to the rest of the world. Because of its cost and its complexity, the Internet definitely appeals to less people than word processing for instance.

The drop in prices of computer hardware is certainly a blessing by itself. All those who needed to upgrade their equipment or buy new one now seize the opportunity. In Jordan, the best-selling PC configuration is a Pentium 100, with 8 MB of memory, 1 GB hard disk drive, with screen, keyboard, mouse, a sound card and a CD-ROM. This powerful set sells for JD1,400 to JD1,800. Price improvement, however, does not constitute a technological advance.

For the end of the year, we are promised faster processors like the Pentium Pro CPU, multi-processor mother boards (a computer with more than a CPU) and better, cheaper colour printers — a fast moving market segment. Still we do not see a major breakthrough in any of these.

The industry may be taking a deep nap, or... a deep breath before releasing some extraordinary product. We have been used to the latter way of doing things. Let's hope we won't be disappointed. In the meantime, the Internet and more drop in prices will do.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

AMAZING FACTS

* A LONDONER invented a brush-necktie to remove dust that preserves one's smartness. The brush was made in the form of nylon threads added to the end of the necktie.

* DAG HAMMARSKJOLD was the fifth member in his family to take up a ministerial post in Sweden. In 1953, he became the U.N. Sectreaty-General with 4,000 personnel working with him. His salary, at the time, reached about $55,000 per annum. Though he was 55 years old, he hadn't yet got married.

* NERO, the Roman Emperor, used to watch athletics at the Grand Court through a binocular made of emerald.

* IN THE last century, in Wales, Britain, it was the custom that a bridegroom had to send on his wedding day a white stick decorated with a black ribbon to a lover whose sweet-heart had deserted him.

* 100 TONNES of paper had been used in building the Massachussett Warship and other 16 tonnes for preparing maps and noticeboards.

* ORIGINALLY, there were no mammals living in New Zealand.

* * * * *

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

** You lose the first round.
Ennaka takhsar al-jawla al-oola.

** You are living in a fool's paradise.
Ennaka ta'eesh fee donial ahlam.

** Make up for your lost time.
Awwid ma fataka minal waqt.

** Don't lower yourself.
La tahott min qadrik.

** Keep up your friendship with others.
Hafez ala sadakatika ma'al aakhareen.

** It lies with you to decide.
Al amru matrook laka litoqarrir ma tashaa.

* * * * *

JOKES



"Be careful, the alarm goes off if you're carrying cigarettes. . . ."

* * * * *

* CLERGYMAN: "I was greatly surprised about your husband's strange behaviour yesterday. He had left the church before I finished preaching."
* WIFE: "You've to excuse him since he very often walks while sleeping."

* * * * *

* SHE: "Two men I admire too much.

HE: "Who's the other one?"

* * * * *

* DAUGHTER: "That's a man whose hair turns grey every month."
MOTHER: "Why? Has he had a terrible accident?"
DAUGHTER: "No, but he has stopped dyeing it."

* * * * *

"AHMED claims his name has been published in the newspaper.
Has he ever written an article or composed a poem?"
" Neither. His father has advertised cautioning everybody not to lend him money."

* * * * *

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) Who were the first men to reach
a- the North Pole, and
b- the South Pole?
When did they do it?

(2) What are winter corn and spring corn? How did they get their names?

(3) PINTO is.....
a) the name of a Portuguese explorer.
b) a disease found in Mexico and other countries to the south.
c) a river in Arizona.
d) a town in the USA.
e) a piebald horse.

(4) Name 10 islands in the Mediterranean Sea (not *including the multitude to be found in the Aegean).*

* * * * *

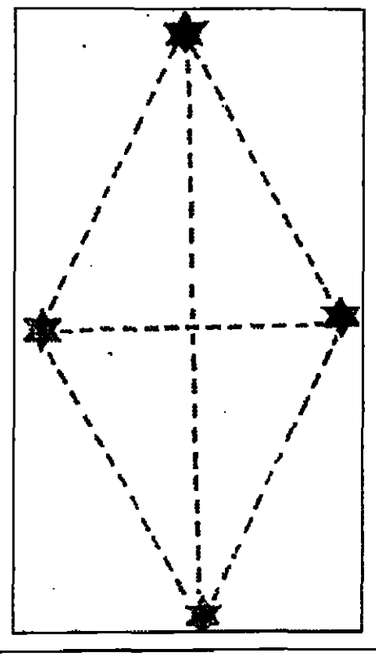
PUZZLES

(A) Rearrange the following names and underline which of these is not an island.

BAUC
POWRARS
LIDNARE
PICRA

(B) An imaginary constellation

THE DIAGRAM represents a group of four stars arranged in diamond fashion. The problem is to add FOUR stars to form a new constellation in which three stars will be in a line in no less than TEN different ways.
Where would you place them?



Learning your ABCs

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen



WHILE IT can be somewhat hard sometimes to come up with ideas for something that one attempts to write for oneself, it can be terribly easy to help others put their own ideas down to paper.

I can only say this because a few days ago, two people came to me asking for help in writing a couple of short essays in English for their university's news magazine. Not surprisingly, helping them was quite easy, but somehow, I was unable to organise my thoughts when it came to writing my piece. By the end of that day, I had not only managed to help write both essays, but had also managed to edit them as well. Still, I was getting nowhere with mine.

One frustrating aspect about this funny little episode — other than that ideas were getting harder and harder to come by — was that here were two people about to graduate from our most prestigious university with writing skills in a language with which they were supposed to be quite familiar, next to nothing.

Of course, the easiest thing that anyone can do upon hearing this would be to lay the blame at the feet of our educational system. The next easiest thing would also be to talk about how this system needs to be made better and more enduring.

All this would of course be quite useless if we cannot at least fulfil the most natural thing of instilling in our students the knowledge of a language that will prove most valuable to them once they try to hack it in the real world.

Now, and if so far as a rule, we have failed at this, it is because we had failed at so many other things. We can, of course, go on to blame administrative and academic absurdities, the over-burdened student-teacher relationship, and the over-stretched teacher-teacher relationship. Experience demonstrates that this sort of talk gets us nowhere.

One could also talk about favouritism and the blatant violations of people's rights to be themselves and to express their identity in their society. Some people actually feel that students should not develop as healthy human beings and must never be allowed to grow and mature as real adults with their own morals and convictions. This is seen as much threatening to a much adored status quo.

Of course, no one can have the right to tell another what to do or not to do, but all have to acknowledge that anything can be permissible within the overall framework of respecting others, their freedom, and their rights.

Unfortunately, such a framework is horribly missing from our lives. Nearly always, we tend to convince ourselves that 'others' do not exist and that everything belongs to us, be it land, streets, queues, parking spaces, universities, items on show at a local exhibition, or anything else for that matter.

It is my belief that this indifference to others has reached epidemic proportions. But as terrible as this is, what is even worse is that we have allowed ourselves to lapse into such a state, and to even enjoy it.

Because of this, we have become careless. We cannot be bothered to read nor do we have any inclinations to learn. To really learn. In addition, these tendencies of ours have already been passed to our children.

We have not grown accustomed to read what writers all over the world are writing partly because we are barricaded from the vast volumes of worldwide published literature, and partly because we have grown somewhat comfortable each in his or her little cocoon.

Our only chance to move forward is to start from scratch all over again. To go back to basics. To forget the past and have faith in the future. To forget our present predicament and all the disappointments that have accompanied it. To pick up where we had left off the last time we had a close look at ourselves. To slide down to the bottom of the ladder and work our way up from ABC.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, June 27, 1996

3:00	Double Dragon (Cartoon)
3:30	NBA
4:30	Pirates (Documentary)
5:00	News Flash
5:01	French Programmes — Les Polluardo
5:30	Varieties — Le Monde Est A Vous
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Ushuaia
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Carol And Company
8:00	*Taratata*
9:10	Star Trek
10:00	News In English
10:25	Movie — Crystal Heart Starring: Lloyd Bochner & Simon Andrew

Friday, June 28, 1996

3:00	Iris, the Happy Professor
3:15	Pebbles And Bamm Bamm Show
3:45	Bush School
3:55	Gillette World Sports
4:10	The Crystal Maze
5:00	News Flash
5:01	French Programmes — Les Polluards
5:30	Film — Drole D'Oiseau
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Allo La Terre
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Growing Pains
8:00	Nasty Boys
9:10	The Wanderer (Drama)
10:00	News In English
10:25	Classic Movie — Vertigo Starring: James Stewart & Kim Novak

Saturday, June 29, 1996

3:00	Moomin
3:30	Pumpkin Patch
4:00	Blue Heelers
4:40	Big Brother Jake
5:00	News Flash
5:01	French Programme — Ordy
5:15	Document — La Vie Devant Moi
5:30	Game show
6:00	Serie — Chateau Vallon
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Faut Pas Rever
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Torkleson's
8:00	Album Show
8:55	Prism
9:10	*Miami Vice*
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:10	Movie — Blue Tornado Starring: Dirk Benedict & Patsy Kensit

Sunday, June 30, 1996

3:05	The Mask
3:30	Adventures On The Rainbow Pond
4:00	Mac & Mutley
4:30	The Paul McKenna Show
5:00	News Flash
5:01	French Programme — Ordy
5:15	La Vie Devant Moi
5:30	Game Show —
6:00	Magazine — Envoye Special
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Sports et Musique
7:30	News headlines
7:35	Varieties
7:45	Closing Ceremony (European Championship '96)
8:50	Short Documentary
9:10	Black's Magic
10:00	News In English
10:25	Counterstrike
11:15	Short Story Cinema
11:50	Nelson's Column

Monday, July 1, 1996

3:00	Bonkers
3:30	*Richie Rich*
4:00	Play About
4:30	Gillette World Sport
5:00	News Flash
5:01	French Programme — Ordy
5:15	Family Programme — L'Ecole Des Fans
6:00	Magazine — Thalassa
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Science — Cinq Sur Cinq
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Milner Fenwick
8:00	Paul McKenna Show
8:30	Matlock
9:10	100 years of capitalism in Korea
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:15	Mancuso

Tuesday, July 2, 1996

3:00	Iris The Happy Professor
3:30	Tennis Wimbledon '96
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Blossom
8:00	Egypt
8:30	Encounter
8:45	Varieties
9:10	Star Trek
10:00	News In English
10:30	Human Target
11:15	Hawaii 5-O
11:45	My Two Wives

Wednesday, July 3, 1996

2:30	Tennis Wimbledon '96
7:00	Le Journal
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Evening Shade
8:00	Super Star
8:30	Chancer
9:10	Hunter
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:15	Bugs

RENDEZVOUS WITH ART

Impressions of Jordan

By Mahmoud I. Mufti



Bedouin woman from Aqaba

SETTING OFF from Bombay to Zanzibar in 1856, British explorer and secret agent Captain Sir Richard Burton wrote: "Of the gladdest moments in human life ... is the departure upon a distant journey into unknown lands." As his journey progressed and he found himself in the Zanzibar channel, he added: " ... Earth, sea and sky all seem wrapped in a soft and sensuous repose ..." Finally, upon arrival to Zanzibar itself, and immediately falling in love with it, Burton confided to his trusty journal that: "... all was voluptuous with gentle swellings ... every feature was hazy and mellow, as if viewed through 'woven air', and not through vulgar atmosphere."

Setting off from Amsterdam to Jordan in 1996, Dutch illustrator and freelancer Marion Verbeeten said: "I had come to Jordan in late 1994 and immediately fell in love with it. I have returned three times since." As her journey progressed from Amman, down the King's Highway to the South, snaking its way through the dauntingly beautiful Wadi Al Mujib and ultimately Karak, Tafileh, Shawbak, Petra and Aqaba, she added: "The rugged mountains, valleys and rock-formations were so breathtaking, one just had to go on and on, on an endless journey, capturing so many scenes along the way."

However, it wasn't until she reached each of those places and interacted with their respective residents that she was able to savour the human elements of warmth and hospitality. Speaking softly and reflectively, the artist expounded that "Most of the people were so friendly and gracious, with a dignified sense of curiosity and beautiful expressions on their faces. I had the unique chance to interact with them in their own element and to be accepted by them."

The current exhibition of paintings at the Royal Cultural Centre, entitled "Impressions of Jordan", features works by Marion Verbeeten, inspired in the course of her travels in Jordan. "I almost always photograph the intended subject-matter before rendering a painting of it. In most cases, I then retreat and proceed with the painting using the colour photographs and images from memory," explains the artist.

The mediums used in most of the works, numbering 36 in all, are acrylic and water-colour on canvas. In some cases, colour-pencils are used for very fine detailing. No one artistic style characterises the whole collection; surrealism, impressionism, cubism and photo-realism are all represented in the various works. One group of outright surrealistic works employ sheet-aluminium instead of canvas.

"Acrylic particularly suits my style of painting and accommodates the vision I have for a particular piece" says the artist, "and because it dries quickly and can be formulated to an almost transparent consistency, it allows me to 'layer' the images and consequently create depth. New layers do not undo previous layers; they simply permit you to add more detail and colour. Accordingly, one is able to achieve very fine subtleties of colour and more or less the precise sense of texture that a particular piece demands."

A portrait of a reclusive elderly woman living in the mountains of Aqaba reveals extremely expressive and sad eyes; an image that is no doubt exacerbated by the convergence of deep skin-furrows between her brows. The look is not one of anger or vindictiveness that can, at times, accompany sorrow, but overwhelmingly one of pleading and anticipated loneliness.

"This truly lovely old lady was only sad when it was time for me to leave," reveals the artist. "She had befriended me and had taken me into her home three days earlier when I had quite inadvertently chanced upon her abode in the mountains. She told me the touching story of her husband's undying devotion to her and his refusal to seek re-marriage or divorce in view of her inability to bear him children. She told me how often she had thanked God for that."

It must have been in similar instances of pure unadulterated confidence and exchange that Sir Fancis Bacon (1561-1626) was inspired to remark, that "... one thing is most admirable ... which is, that this communicating of a Man's self to his friends works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys and cutteth griefs in halfs. For there is no Man that imparteth his joys to his friends, but he joyeth the more; and no Man that imparteth his griefs to his friends, but he grieveth the less."

At this juncture in the discourse, both the artist and I took a step back and looked silently into the woman's face in the portrait. The artist then clasped her hands together and with her head slightly tilted to one side and her eyes almost watering, continued her recountal: "She welcomed me with such gentle sincerity that the friendship sparked off as a result — in the span of a mere three days — has touched, and continues to touch me to the very core of my being. Her demeanour was one of utmost poise and grace, strongly reflective of her bedouin roots. It became clear that the language of kindness and hospitality totally overwhelmed and overshadowed the differences in our respective cultures and languages. I don't envision a future visit to Jordan without calling in on this very special and dignified friend."

Yet the remainder of Ms. Verbeeten's work is imbued with the same exacting sensitivity and unrelenting attention to the human element. Even in her depiction of the centuries-old rock facades of the Monastery and Treasury at Petra, the viewer feels that a certain appreciation of, and for the people who lived there at the time, is strongly alluded to in her painting. Every fold, nook and cranny in the rock is recreated in her work. Pale yellow-ochre streaks running down the length of rock-fronts are also there, telling their own story of how burbling sulphur-water from hot mineral springs once delighted the ancient Nabateans in its free and extravagant flow.

One of the ancient Roman amphitheatres of Jerash is depicted in black and white. Evocative of a hybrid Dali-Escher style, the steps are delineated from a precarious and dizzying angle, with maximal use of shadows. Together with another painting of fallen column-heads and carved rocks that look uncannily similar to heavily calcified spinal-vertebrae of a Tyrannasaurus Rex, the effect is undeniably surrealistic.

Several days spent in Aqaba allowed the artist to get acquainted with an Egyptian carpet-weaver residing there. She was invited into his home for coffee, and with the help of an interpreter, was briefed about the art of carpet-weaving. One of her paintings is a depiction of a window from inside the relatively dark room. Straddling a rickety horizontal wooden beam just outside the window is one of his carpets, laid out to dry after washing. The splendour provided by the colours is the next best thing to having a migrating Australian Macaw parrot perched outside one's window. The colours are brilliant red, yellow, green and indigo. The patterns are more those of ancient Mayan or Aztec culture than anything local. The cumulative effect is very 'true to itself' and atmospheric a la Georgia O'Keefe.

The central themes in Marion Verbeeten's works are those of discovery and journey, accompanied by an unrelenting sensitivity to both dimensions. The atmosphere in her works is one reminiscent of that which one experiences on journeys to remote places, though not of one's own choosing, but places that satisfy and address a certain inner-calling in that person.

Ms. Verbeeten first came to Jordan on tourism, during which she spontaneously — and without planning the trip to be an artistic excursion — completed two paintings. She came back several times thereafter to answer that first calling. Her collection is the mature fruit of that experience; a collection one-and-a-half years in the making. She has, first as a journeyer, then as an artist, been a chronicler of her own experiences. As such, one would expect them to be very private and of relevance to her alone. On the contrary, however, the universalism they emanate seems very real.

In the late 18th century, portrait painter and essayist William Hazlitt expressed his own feelings on expeditions, saying: "Nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone ... The soul of a journey is liberty; perfect liberty to think, feel [and] do just as one pleases. We go [on] a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments ... to leave ourselves behind ... With change of place we change our ideas ... our opinions and feelings. The landscape [then] bares its bosom to the enraptured eye..."

Looking at the artist's works, one either likes them, relates to them, or feels indifference towards them on grounds of artistic style. But it is harder to deny them credit for originality and inspiration. The viewer feels that the artist was able to interact with her surroundings in the various stages of her expedition; that she was able get something out of her journey across Jordan, as well as to give something meaningful to those she met along the way. Jordan's ruggedly-beautiful landscape may have, accordingly, responded to her "enraptured eye" in the metaphysical existentialist sense, and borne itself intimately for capture on her canvas.

The exhibition, entitled "Impressions of Jordan" opened at the Royal Cultural Centre on Sunday June 23 and runs for a week (8 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.) It closes the evening of Sunday June 30.



A view from a carpet-weaver's window — Aqaba

Jurassic Park ride opens at Universal Studios

By Karen Lowe
Agence France Presse



A giant Tyrannasaurus Rex dinosaur hovers over a boat load of tourists on the new "Jurassic Park — The Ride" attraction at Universal Studios Hollywood in this publicity photograph. The $110 million ride was unveiled to VIP guests June 15 and will be open to the public (Reuter photo)

LOS ANGELES — Jurassic Park, the new ride opening this week at Universal Studios, puts boat riders within inches of colossal animatronic dinosaurs and plunges them down six stories into a lagoon.

The riders begin the five-minute journey in a a swamp where the long-necked ultrasauruses graze. The boats float under a rock ledge and waterfall and move toward bus-sized stegosauruses that wave spiked tails over visitors.

The ride was conceived three years before the movie was even released and it was built on six acres transformed into a lush tropical cove on the lot of Universal Studios at a cost of $110 million.

"It cost twice as much as making the movie Jurassic Park, but $75,000 less than (the movie) Waterworld," quipped director and producer Steven Spielberg at the opening of the ride.

As in the movie, director-actor Sir Richard Attenborough greets visitors on videotape, reprising his film role as an entrepreneur who uses DNA to recreate dinosaurs and builds a park that ultimately runs amok.

The lot is landscaped with 926 trees and 7,440 plants and flowers and 350 palms, including a few droopy ones that kept flopping onto the red carpet leading into the park for the luminaries attending the opening day.

Much of the ride's budget went toward making the dinosaurs mobile and realistic looking with electronic robotics and plastic hide imprinted with what the designers believe to be realistic markings.

Hydraulics play a large part of the drama with computerisation allowing for more fluid motion of the dinosaurs that walk, hop, flap and spit into the faces of passing visitors.

The ride will be more exciting for those who have seen the movie because they will know the cues. Broken sparking electrical wires let riders know the ravenous raptors are loose.

The thundering sound and vibration generated by 10,000 watts of stereo sound can be none other than that of the star, Tyrannasaurus Rex, who makes several appearances.

The 45-tonne animatronic T-rex makes a 40-kilometre an hour rush at riders before retreating and then hovers only inches from the riders' heads, roaring and opening and closing an impressive set of dentures.

Those who have seen the movie know only too well what happens when the car smashed by the dinosaur teeters over a cement embankment.

Prepare to get wet.

About half-way through the ride, boats are sucked into a drainage pipeline and dragged up slowly until they encounter an angry T-rex that makes a brief appearance before disappearing into a haze of fog.

At this point, riders sense what is coming: They will go down an 84-foot drop at a speed reaching 80 kilometres an hour — the fastest, steepest water-ride in amusement ride history — before splashdown into the lagoon.

As drenched riders step out of the boat, they are immediately greeted by a woman urging them to buy pictures of their terrified faces as they whizzed down the last stretch.

Several steps later riders are obliged to go through the Jurassic Park outfitters gift shop where studio marketing geniuses essentially succeed where the movie character entrepreneur failed.

Baseball caps bearing the Jurassic Park emblems sell for $15, jackets with suede sleeves fetch $194 and there are a variety of stuffed and plastic dinosaurs, pens and necklaces.

"I survived the ride," read one T-shirt priced at $15.

Chechenya war film finds fan in Yeltsin

By Chris Bird
Reuter

MOSCOW — The days have long gone when Russian culture was at the mercy of the censor, but Sergei Bodrov was understandably nervous when President Boris Yeltsin demanded to see his film.

Not only does it tackle Mr. Yeltsin's disastrous military campaign in Chechenya but it did so with a presidential election just around the corner.

Yet Bodrov found he had won an unlikely fan.

"I was nervous as I only had one print of the film," said the shy director after its first Russian screening at Moscow's cavernous House of Cinematographers this month.

"But his security guards brought it back and congratulated me, so I think Yeltsin liked it," he said.

After the presidential screening in April, Caucasus Prisoner, the first feature film about the Chechen war, went on to win two prizes at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

The film, set against the stunning backdrop of the Caucasus, opens with a Russian patrol ambushed by rebels on a dusty mountain road.

Two Russian survivors are tied to the back of ponies and taken to a remote village nestling round an old mosque, where their mountaineer captor plans to exchange them for his own son, held by the Russians.

Bodrov dismissed comparisons with Vietnam War movies, saying he began the film before war had broken out in Chechenya.

"Look at America — they had to wait at least 10 years before they had enough distance to do a film about Vietnam," Bodrov said.

His words doubled the time Hollywood took to release major Vietnam War movies after the final withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1973, but Caucasus Prisoner is full of stock images from the ongoing Chechen conflict.

The guileless Vanya, one of the two Russian hostages played by Bodrov's son Sergei, has the face of thousands of shaven-headed teenagers sent to serve in Chechenya.

Vanya's mother, who in searching for him runs up against Russian officials who care little about Vanya's fate, is typical of the desperate women who comb Chechenya for their missing sons.

But unlike films about Vietnam, the film pulls its punches, which could explain its popularity with Mr. Yeltsin, who has played down the carnage of the 18-month conflict in which 30,000 people have been killed.

Where Russian helicopter gunships simply hover over the rebel village in the film, America's Vietnam movies show them blasting it to pieces.

Larissa Yusipova, film critic at the newspaper Izvestiya, said the film, meant to have a more timeless significance, suffers from its release so close to the war.

"This is a film about the centuries-old relationship between Russia and the Caucasus," Ms. Yusipova argued.

Bodrov concurs. "I wanted to show something that has not changed for over a hundred years...The Caucasus is the same now as when Tolstoy was writing about it."

A gunnery officer in Chechenya during Russia's wars of conquest in the Caucasus last century, Lev Tolstoy vowed to "contribute, by the aid of the cannon, to the slaughter of the wild rebellious Asiatics."

Cannons have been since replaced by Grad rockets but Russian perceptions of the Chechens appear to have changed little.

The Chechen fighters in the film wrestle and drink vodka when not battling the Russian infidel like noble savages in a 19th century Russian novel.

The daughter of Vanya's captor, an oriental-style beauty who is soft on the prisoner, tells him he has to die in revenge for her brother who is killed trying to escape the Russians.

In real life, Chechen guerrillas tend to put their feet up with their families when not fighting. When they drink, the Muslim Chechens drink tea.

And Russian prisoners have proved an embarrassment to their own army as they have often claimed they get better treatment from their Chechen foe.

Bodrov did not enjoy filming in the Daghestan mountains, the Caucasus region east of Chechenya. He said on one occasion an actor who played a Chechen commander — and who also doubled on the set's security detail — turned up with an armed gang to demand a bigger fee.

"It's a different century up there," he said.

'Shark teeth' drug will save cancer patients' lives

By John Newell

SCIENTISTS have made a breakthrough which will save the lives of many patients with cancer or AIDS. The U.K. researchers have found a way to synthesise a natural substance that is the only drug known to be able to cure the fungal infections that kill many sufferers.

Patients taking immunosuppressive drugs after transplant surgery are also expected to benefit from new families of drugs made possible by this breakthrough. Infections with fungi are a growing problem today, and not only because of AIDS.

Krista Kasdorf of the Organic Chemistry Department of Imperial College in London, who with Professor Anthony Barrett is working on drugs to combat these infections, says: "We're seeing more and more people who are AIDS patients, or people after transplant surgery or having cancer chemotherapy — all of whom have suppressed immune systems, so they can no longer fight off fungal infections that normal healthy people can."

Weakened Immunity

The treatments that are now available for fungal infections can keep them under control and reduce them to harmless proportions in normal people. But they don't eliminate the infections. In healthy people this does not matter as the infections are kept to harmless levels.

But the fungi keep growing in AIDS patients, others with weakened immune systems, people taking drugs to suppress their immunity to prevent transplant rejection, and those whose immunity is weakened by chemotherapy side-effects.

The infections become serious and especially in the case of AIDS are often fatal. The most feared of all these fungal infections is Aspergillus fumigatus, a lung disease that can kill within 24 hours of becoming established in someone with a weakened immune system. Because of the increasing success of transplant surgery and of some forms of cancer chemotherapy, as well as the spread of AIDS, infection with Aspergillus is a major problem.

Promising Antibiotic

In 1989 a Japanese pharmaceutical company, Fujisawa, discovered an antibiotic — made like most antibiotics by a micro-organism living in the soil —that looked promising against this deadly fungus and other fungal infections.

"They did their screening tests and it was discovered that this compound is very good at killing what are known as filamentous fungi," says Kasdorf. "That is the class of fungi that includes some of those that are currently troubling AIDS patients and suchlike people."

However Fujisawa did not make enough of it to be any use. "To give you an idea, from about 50 litres of fermentation broth in which they were growing the organism that makes the antibiotic, they were obtaining, after arduous purification, only a 300,000th of a gramme of the actual compound — not enough to treat even one patient."

Most antibiotics are made by growing the organisms that produce them in large tanks and extracting and purifying what they produce. But this one could not be made that way. So Kasdorf, with Professor Barrett, set out to find a way to make it artificially. It was a particularly difficult task because of the peculiar shape of the molecule of the antibiotic, nicknamed "jawsamycin" because of its resemblance to the jagged teeth of a shark.

Shark teeth

Dr. Kasdorf explains: "The stereochemistry of 'jawsamycin' was not known. So initially we had to determine that before we could go about the synthesis. Our biggest problem with the synthesis was that the jawsamycin molecule is made of many so-called rings of carbon atoms, which are really little triangles like shark teeth.

"The atoms in these are very strained and want to burst the triangles open to relieve this strain. So we were constantly fighting to keep the compounds we were trying to synthesise from decomposing." Five of the tiny triangles had to be fitted together in exactly the right way — rather like building a five-storey house of cards with cards that were liable to explode in your hand. This was really clever chemistry. Apart from the instability of the triangles, there were 1,024 different ways in which they could be fitted together and only one of these produced a molecule which killed fungi. But Dr. Kasdorf and Prof. Barrett made that molecule.

Now they have shown that jawsamycin can be made synthetically, the way is open to scale up their synthesis to put the antibiotic, and new variants of it, to work against Aspergillus fumigatus and other deadly infections.

Synthetic triumph

"Drug companies will now be looking at jawsamycin and studying its structure in more detail, and perhaps themselves synthesising some analogues. Jawsamycin will lead on to new drugs. We've come up with a method of synthesis that will enable us to make not only jawsamycin but these other drugs. But the method of synthesis had to be found before any of this was possible."

It will be a few years before drugs based on jawsamycin can become widely available. But when they do, many thousands of AIDS, cancer and transplant patients will have Krista Kasdorf's and Anthony Barrett's patient and inventive chemistry to thank for saving their lives — LPS Feature.

Health-obsessed Germans troubled by madcow onslaught

By Fiona Fleck
Reuter

BONN — Germany may seem the toughest of all European Union (EU) states when it comes to protecting its citizens against any health risks posed by BSE "madcow" disease.

But in the country itself, many people think the government is not informing them adequately or fighting hard enough in Europe's "beef war" to keep the fatal cattle disease at bay.

"Since the BSE scandal, many consumers want to know exactly what sort of meat they are eating and precisely how BSE can be transmitted," said Beate Dussa, who runs a BSE telephone hotline — one of many set up recently across the country.

"We try to inform people as objectively as we can. But at the moment there's no scientific proof as to whether it's transmittable from cattle to humans," said Dussa, who works for an ecological farming association in the southwestern town of Bad Duerkheim.

Since the British government said in March that there might be a link between eating beef and the fatal human equivalent of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), Germany has been in the throes of panic.

The EU imposed a global ban on British beef exports and — in the absence of scientific data — television chat shows, radio phone-in programmes and sensational media reports on the subject have whipped the public into a frenzy.

Dussa is being bombarded with questions: Can you catch BSE by eating fruit or vegetables cultivated using cattle dung? Can you catch BSE through gelatine used in the manufacture of medicines, food products or cosmetics?

Is it safe to eat poultry which could have been given feed containing BSE-infected cattle remains? Can madcow disease be transmitted through bull sperm?

"It's frustrating for us all, because the answer in most cases is 'we just don't know'," said Dussa. "There is no scientific proof either way. That's why consumers are changing their habits and turning more to ecologically-farmed meat."

Germans take few chances with their health and their scrupulous attitude to such matters is institutional. Chemists can be found on nearly every corner, providing havens for hypochondriacs.

Employers are obliged by law to pay half their employees' health insurance contributions. Germans are entitled to long state-funded stays in spas to recover from stress and sickness.

Even abroad, Germans take no risks and have a wide choice of medical phrase books in foreign languages. Apart from prescribed medicines, countless all-purpose "feel-good" drugs covering a wide range of unspecified ailments are widely used.

A guide aimed at explaining German customs to Americans sums Germans up in one word: "Worriers".

"They worry about health problems common to other Westerners but above all fear a disease unknown in the rest of the world called 'Kreislaufstoerung' roughly translated as "circulatory problems'," said the guide.

"It covers everything from mild headaches and dizziness caused by the change in the weather to major heart malfunction. Most Germans suffer from some form of it quite regularly and it keeps people off work for long periods of time," it said.

Before "madcow" fever peaked recently, only two per cent of German beef imports actually came from Britain.

Nor has the suspected new strain of BSE's fatal human equivalent Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease — which prompted scientists to make the link — been detected in Germany.

But the sheer lack of scientific evidence struck so much terror into Germans that beef sales immediately plunged 70 per cent and are still struggling to recover.

One survey found a quarter of consumers have temporarily given up beef, while nearly half have reduced beef consumption in favour of other meats.

Germany prides itself in having been at the forefront of efforts to fight BSE and tried to create safeguards capable of satisfying even the most fastidious German consumer.

Weeks before the EU imposed its export ban, Germany's 16 states started banning British beef and beef products in response to consumer fears over madcow disease.

And even when the rest of the EU made a concession to Britain by lifting the ban on some beef products, the German regional states were firm that as far as they were concerned the ban on British beef was still in place.

The Bonn government is considering taking its case against re-admitting the products to the European Court of Justice.

Health Minister Horst Seehofer also proposed that a EU panel of experts should vet the British beef products to further assuage public fears and restore consumer confidence.

For many, such measures merely scratch the surface.

"Madcow disease adds a new dimension to the long series of food scandals: Swine fever, salmonella, hormone-treated calves and contaminated baby food," said a commentary in Vital, one of Germany's leading health magazines.

Vital along with 20 leading German health, nutrition and environmental groups launched a campaign this month in favour of ecological farming. It urged the government to drop intensive agriculture methods and EU farming subsidies.

"The government must promote ecological alternatives to ways of farming that destroy the environment and can make us sick," said their open letter to the government, signed "with deepest concern for the health of the people of our country."

How the AIDS virus evades immune system

By Henry Llewen

SCIENTISTS have discovered how the virus that causes AIDS manages to survive and spread, in spite of the strong response from the body's immune system against it.

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus, known as HIV for convenience, does it through point mutations in one section of its genome, which have the effect of not only protecting the virus carrying the mutation against the immune system, but also confusing killer T-cells so they become unable to attack normal HIV.

This discovery has implications for the design of both drugs to attack, and vaccines to protect against HIV. The virus infects white blood cells — T-cells (Thymus-derived lymphocytes) of the immune system — and eventually destroys so many of them that the patient's defence against infections is hopelessly weakened.

The infected person is killed by diseases that they would normally soon eliminate. But HIV is usually held at bay, for a long time before this happens, by other cells of the patient's immune system — killer T-cells — which do their best to eliminate the infection.

Dr. Paul Klenerman and his colleagues in the Oxford Institute of Molecular Medicine has been finding out why they fail eventually. "It was already known that there are a group of patients in whom the virus seems to persist for long periods and not to destroy the immune system," says Dr. Klenerman.

"But in the majority of cases, there is a period of 5 to 10 years without symptoms, after which the immune system starts to decline and the number of active virus-attacking cells in the immune system seems to drop off. And in a minority of patients it happens quicker than that."

Killer cells

In most patients, however, the immune system puts up a colossal fight. During the period before symptoms develop, HIV is kept under control by huge numbers of killer cells, destroying the virus in infected cells.

Research has suggested that, like other viruses, a way in which the virus evades this onslaught is by constantly mutating. Says Paul Klenerman: "One of the features of HIV is that when it copies itself it makes mistakes. And that's because its copying mechanism doesn't have a correction system.

"So that any time any new virus is made, you can get little errors — what we call point mutations. And these can allow the virus to change its coat (surface) or other parts that are recognised by the immune system. This means that the virus becomes invisible to the immune system. The virus may also be able to hide itself in parts of the body that are inaccessible to the immune system. Those are the ideas that have been floating around."

Now Dr. Klenerman and his Oxford colleagues have taken this a stage further. They were looking to see whether a point mutation in one particular part of the viral genome (part of the gene which codes for the enzyme reverse transcriptase) had the effect of making the virus effectively invisible to the killer cells seeking it.

But they found the virus was cleverer than that. It seems that the killer cells can actually engage that little bit of virus, but it does not give them the right stimulus to kill the target. It works almost like a decoy; the little bit of mutant virus as the non-mutated would.

Mutated viruses

"So the overall effect of the mutation is that not only is the killer cell unable to kill the mutated virus, but it is confused. And in the test-tube experiments we did, after killer cells that had been exposed to the mutant virus, they didn't then seem to be able to kill the ordinary virus. So in the body of someone infected with HIV, where you'll have these mutated viruses floating around, although the immune system is very active, it's being made much less effective."

By producing these decoys, HIV distracts and weakens the immune response. This may be the main way in which it overcomes the body's defences, though, say the researchers, it is too early to be certain.

Apart from demonstrating yet again what a formidable enemy HIV is, this research offers some clues to fighting it more effectively. Vaccines designed to stimulate the immune response against HIV must never contain the decoy versions of the virus, otherwise, far from stimulating an immune response, they will probably weaken it.

A more positive outcome is the hope of developing drugs targeted against the decoy mutation, and so be able to prevent the virus making use of it. In general, but in general, the more we know about this deadly enemy, the better our chance of destroying it and protecting ourselves against it — LPS Feature.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

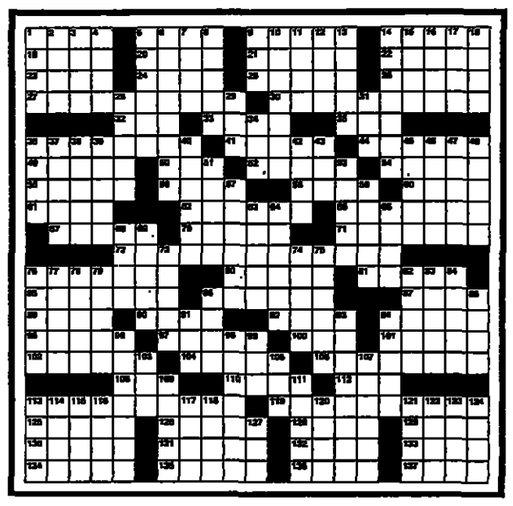
CAPITALISM
By Lee G. Barrow

ACROSS

1 Piquancy
5 Prima donna
9 Ruler of the underworld
14 Open square
19 Eight, in Santander
20 Chemical compound
21 Giant
22 — up (hidden)
23 State of Defiance
24 Short biographical account
25 Drum type
26 State as a belief
27 British army officer
30 '20s dance
32 Yvonne's yes
33 Business bdef?
35 *Legislator:* abbr.
36 German chancellor
41 Type of bear
44 Tropical plant
49 Stared at suggestively
50 Resp. to a ques.
52 Appreciate
54 Heavy gas
55 Narrow cuts
56 Chinese dynasty
58 Touch
60 Ta-ta, in Tuscany
61 Ice cream container
62 Complainer
65 Grape variety
67 Gumbos
70 Spiral
71 Expurgate
72 Seats of government
76 A US president
80 Bryant or Loos
81 Pile
85 Opposed
86 Nighttime nuisance
87 Rural deity of myth
89 Handle roughly
90 Location
92 Jane Austen novel
94 Deaf: Sp.
95 Downs or oaks start
97 Sears
100 Acronymic weapon
101 Value
102 Playground fixture
104 Gladden
106 19th century explorer
108 Patriotic org.
110 Caustics
112 Edge
113 Divine guidance
119 Small stone
125 Washes
126 — game (pitcher's perfect performance)
128 "True —" (Wayne movie)
129 "Once — a Mattress"
130 January, in Jalisco
131 Saw
132 Labyrinth
133 Grow dim
134 OH city
135 Hades river of forgetfulness
136 Copied
137 Defect

DOWN

1 Kind of lens
2 Reverberate
3 Knee-ankle connection
4 Horn sound
5 Eat
6 Hassle
7 Ballot
8 Toxin
9 QL units
10 A US president
11 Dean's state
12 Scarlet's home
13 Humdingers
14 Mythical bird
15 Cuts off
16 Landed
17 Greek philosopher
18 Yemeni seaport
28 Prods
29 Stingy confirmation
31 Exploration vehicle
34 Stooge name
36 Pear variety
37 Ice house
38 Move furtively
39 Poetic or musical measure
40 Chivalrous rank
42 Open
43 Hold up
45 Pilgrimage city
46 Pungent bulb
47 Glides
48 Positive terminal
51 Renee's garment
53 New Mexico state flower
57 Lubrication item
59 Rings
63 Soft, in music
64 Become outdated
66 Aerie
68 Org.
69 Glacial term
73 Caper
74 Objects
75 Airport runway surfaces
76 Outlaw Jesse
77 Open
78 Bring about
79 Weight measures
82 "But such — as Gretchen goldsmithing make" (Yeats)
83 Lesser Antilles native
84 Asian vine
96 Close securely
98 Negative votes
91 Article
93 Liquidate gradually
94 From
96 A US president
98 Sir Walter
99 Pig place
103 Small mass
105 Ginger
107 Slang: tightly
109 Pertaining to the kidneys
111 Greek letter
113 Entirety
114 Relative position
115 Done
116 — Beach, FL
117 Protuberance
118 Prattle
120 Snare
121 Use a trump
122 Iridescent gem
123 Musical ending
124 Recognized
127 Ovalbs item



Diagramless, 21x21
By Frances Burton

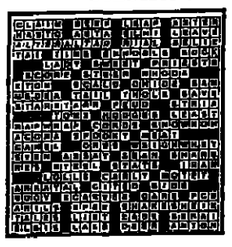
ACROSS

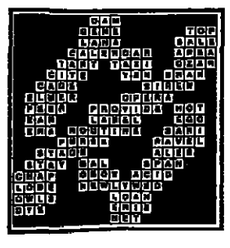
1 Milky stone
5 Alma —
7 Wagers
11 Animated
12 Jai —
13 Become more compassionate
15 Diagnosis
16 Rope for holding an animal
19 Put an edge on
20 Historical periods
22 Shells out
24 "True —" (Rin)
25 Children's game
26 Thoroughfares: abbr.
29 Showy flower
30 Form measures
33 German admiral
34 Lease again
35 Silly ones
36 European lake
40 Desert fruits
42 Believer in: suff.
43 Flues
45 Wills
47 Basketball's Johnson
49 More domesticated
52 Brainchild
53 Torrent
54 Wide streets: abbr.
55 Electrical unit
58 Senator Kennedy
57 Baby powder
58 — Points, MI
61 Floundering
62 Basil or dill, e.g.
63 Indian dwellings
67 Confection
68 Actor Sean
71 Poker stake
72 French river
73 Max or Buddy
74 Pittsburgh product
75 Being: Lat.

DOWN

1 Sheaf of films
2 Sallow
3 Crooked
4 Embankment
9 Charter
7 British nobleman
8 African antelope
9 VCR filters
10 Family member, briefly
14 Fitzgerald novel
15 Steve McQueen movie
17 Swashbuckler Flynn
18 Pull up
21 Editor's command
22 Mafia party
23 Walked the floor
26 Twirls
27 Afternoon social
28 "— in the Clowns"
31 Chemical compound
32 Glimpses
33 Tilt
34 Quick summary
36 Desert transport
37 Length times width
38 Wrongdoing
39 Totals
41 Buzz
44 Places for erecting buildings
46 Fruit drink
48 Yield, as territory
49 Baby bed
50 Nautical cry
51 Fracas
56 African country
59 French income
60 Flat
64 "Desire Under the —"
65 Make very happy
66 Fathom
67 Vehicle for hire
69 Dollar bills
70 TV part

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE





Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Short salesperson in modern big and tall men's store sells heavy pair of gray boots to seven-foot boy.
2. The corporate downsizing and layoff frenzy has an upside: Most commuter traffic is lighter now.
3. Cynical chief paid left-handed compliment to ham-handed handyman.
4. Sad sailor, in hot hurricane area, is under stress and has a tropical depression.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1.MSRICK EXTRPHA' EIKEIEAH XTB NGILCBA XT ESOOB BIGOL'H RIHA MSKASHAPE TOSHAPE NOSHAPE. —By Ed Huddleson

2.ENHIO CEXED PCKABC OPKABCK PCBACP MH NIC HC XPNG SUPER SHED. VIM CHVSOG SEC ABCAMP MUP DABCAMP, KH UP NPKABCK. —By Duane H. McGogy

3.WEBB JOB KLEWBTZ OWEAX YTS DULB WTPEZUYD PEZKAXTL BUXTLOXT. BJT "NETBY'X NE SUYNESB." —By K.C. Doyle

4.YPAIN NBYK SEI FUM BXKO DUMPS TOUFLEE, XK PUMMEK BUYO EDD U LBAFUMBMK KUKEEE. —By Frank N. Stein

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) Dr. Cook claimed to have reached the North Pole in April, 1908, but his claim is discredited, and the honour is given to Robert E. Peary who arrived there in April, 1909.

The South Pole was first reached by Ruuld Amundsen in 1912, closely followed by Captain Scott.

(2) Winter corn is wheat and rye sown in autumn and growing through the winter; spring corn is barley and oats not sown until the spring.

(3) It is all of them.

(4) Iviza, Majorca, Corsica, Sardinia, Elba, Capri, Malta, Corfu, Sicily, Crete, Cyprus, Pantellaria, Rhodes, the Lipari Islands and Stromboli.

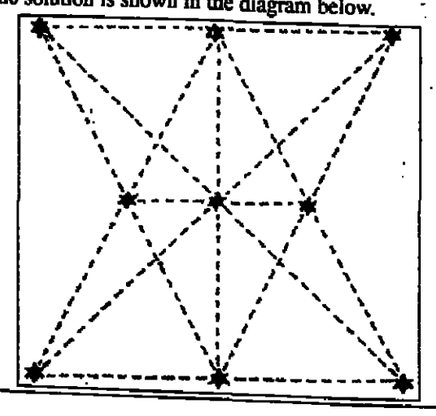
* * * * *

PUZZLES

(A) **Sparrow.**

The islands are **Cuba, Ireland,** and **Capri.**

(B) **An Imaginary Constellation:**
The solution is shown in the diagram below.



Aqaba's last palm shore in danger of annihilation

By Alia Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

AQABA — Eleven years after the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA) first drew up development plans for the central coastal area, conservationists feel that Aqaba's cultural heritage and natural environment are gradually being eliminated.

On the 1.2-km-long shoreline, situated mid-town on the southwards curve of the bay from the yacht club to Aqaba's main port, known as Al Hafayir (the cultivated palm gardens of south Jordan), the remnants of traditional Aqaba are about to be erased to give way to modern construction.

Visible by boat as a lush belt of palm groves, shading the only section left of Aqaba's old fishing beach interspersed with carpentered shacks, cafés, and Jordan's only shipyard, Al Hafayir abounds with ancient palm groves sheltering gardens nurtured by numerous sweet water springs and owned by Aqaba's old families.

This stretch of shoreline is slated to be bulldozed for the implementation of the Aqaba master plan, intended to be carried out by the private sector, which includes the construction of multi-storey buildings, tourism facilities, commercial centres, and parking lots. A look at the revised plan for 1995 shows 63 separate clusters of adjoining building sites partitioned by vehicle ways and paved paths.

The gardens will be bulldozed, said Mzahim Muheisen, secretary general of the ARA. Only the palm trees will be spared, he said regretfully, as the ARA has acquired a machine that can uproot and transfer them somewhere else, should the need arise, Mr. Muheisen told the Jordan Time, stressing that they will be kept within the confines of Al Hafayir area.

A reevaluation of the site should be considered, say conservationists, as Al Hafayir represents a unique nature reserve of Jordan's 70 km access to the sea. Only two other sections remain with more scattered palm growth: a small area west of the hotels on the north shore, which has already been granted construction permits for private residential development, and one on the sand dunes opposite the hotels, slated for an international conference centre and further tourism development.

Mr. Muheisen said that the decision to call the area "La Côte Verte" in the master plans was because it is the only green spot left in Aqaba. "When we talk about tourism, what do we have that Eilat does not? One of them is this (Al Hafayir) area," he acknowledged.

Arts and architecture environmental specialist Ali Jabri argues that Al Hafayir falls within a historical context that should be maintained in its present natural setting. The area has a "natural and cultural context relating to the beginnings of the history of Jordan," he said.

Half-way along the palm shore lies the historic part of Aqaba which, apart from the Eila site, forms the nucleus of the town's cultural and historic identity. The Mamluk fort, which was once a caravan stop for pilgrims bound for the Holy places in Hijaz, faces Aqaba's old mosque housing the tomb of Sheikh Mohammed Al Aqbawi. Just next to the citadel is the house of Sherif Hussein Bin Ali, known as the Customs House during the period of the Kingdom of Hijaz.

"Al Hafayir is the last pure stretch of old palm groves and fishing way of life once circling the whole bay," affirmed Mr. Jabri. Indeed, the Department of Archives' aerial pictures show a continnos crescent of palm-surrounded oases, fringing the shores of the bay.

Architect and designer Ammar Khammash argues that the distinctiveness of Al Hafayir makes it an ideal tourism asset. Instead of bulldozing the area to make way for construction projects, this site should be upgraded and highlighted as a tourist spot, he told the Jordan Times.

Moreover, Mr. Khammash believes that Al Hafayir must at the very least be documented because of its unique ecology. He noted that the ecosystem will be eliminated prior to any documented proof of its existence.

While this area is 1.2-km-long, Yamaniyya, further south along the coast, and also part of the ARA's development plans for Aqaba, is 9.5 km long, said Mr. Jabri, arguing that Yamaniyya is devoid of a cultural context, historical remains or pre-existing vegetation or palm groves. It makes available its length of almost 10 km exclusively for tourism development under the ARA master plan. The area reaches an inland stretch of variously 1.5 km, bringing the total area covered to about 14.5 square kilometres. This puts it in startling contrast to the vast area covered by the south tourism zone compared with the area of the palm beach, barely one-fifteenth the size of Yamaniyya.

Al Hafayir has posed a significant problem for the development of Aqaba for more than a decade, said President of the ARA Fayez Khasawneh. The area was originally divided between 6,000 owners into 800 plots which were subdivided among an increasing number of inheritors unable to come to terms with ownership and development agreements amongst themselves, said Dr. Khasawneh.

The ARA decided to intervene 11 years ago and implement the Zoning Law of 1968 which allows the government to dissolve party lines and rezone any given area, said Dr. Khasawneh. The law stipulated that the largest shareholder of the land should buy out the other owners.

The Zoning Law was implemented more than four years ago and completed by the end of 1995. Currently, there are approximately 185 plots of land owned by over 300 people, he said, adding that the current percentage of landowners stands at 20 per cent of the original number, which makes the area more manageable for development.

Some landowners insist that they did not want to sell, nor did they wish to be relocated. Others maintain that because of the "personal ambitions" of a few, the ARA was able to make everyone else sell.

"This is my identity. I do not want to leave," said an owner whose land has been in the family since early 1920s.

Mr. Muheisen is aware of the human element involved. "If you read the names of the landowners of Al Hafayir, you will know the history of Aqaba," he said.

Reducing the number of landowners was a "sensitive issue," he said. He insisted, however, that most owners want to develop their land.

"The development plans were a request from the owners of Al Hafayir," he said. "The minute we put the Zoning Law into effect, it raised the value of the land." According to Mr. Muheisen, the original estimation of one dunum was JD 60-70,000, while the figure currently stands at approximately JD 200-300,000.

Conservation is important, he said, "but this is a relative matter. When the owners have a plot on the sea that it is worth JD 200-300,000, and the ARA tells them to keep it for the sake of environmental conservation, these people will not accept it."

The ARA, continued Mr. Muheisen, found that the best compromise is to keep the palm trees in the same area (although conservationists wonder if this will be the case), while at the same time allowing the owners to develop their land according to criteria set by the revised master plan.

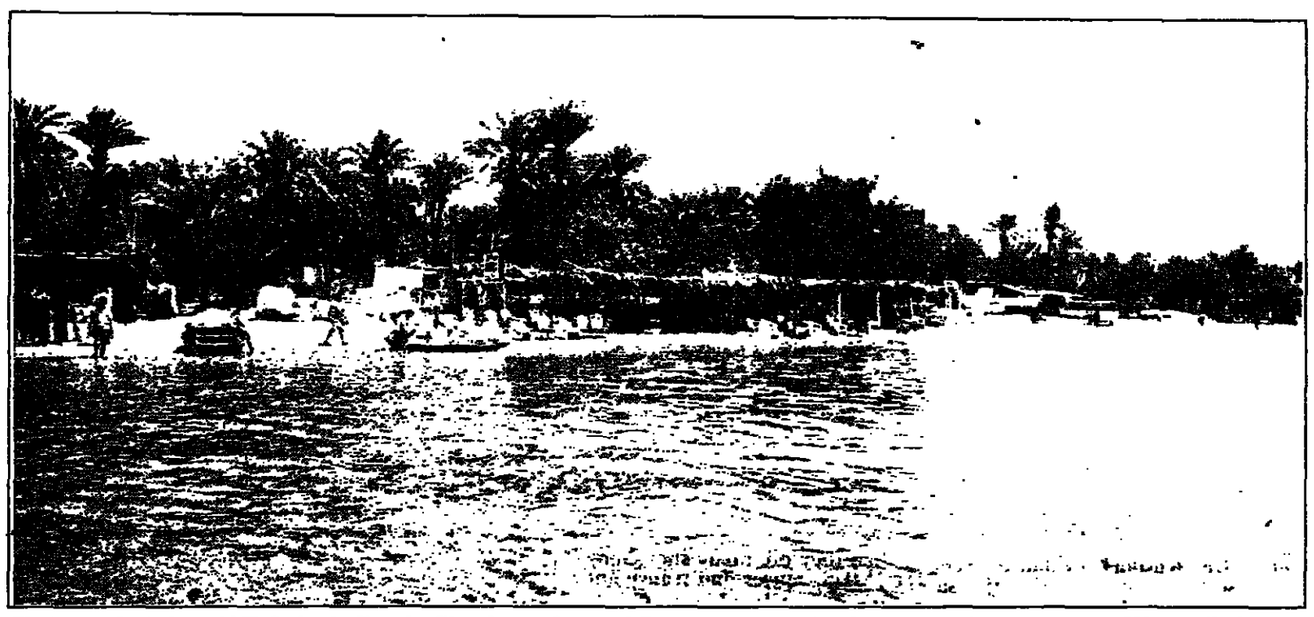
According to Duraid Mahasneh, former secretary general of the ARA, subsequently director of the Aqaba Ports Corporation, and currently the president of the Jordan Valley Authority, the master plan needs a consortium of different people such as planners, economists, conservationists and inhabitants from Al Hafayir so that an appropriate compromise can be reached. Such a consortium would provide an "integrated coastal management, where all points of views are considered without negative impact on the environment," he added.

Conservationists argue, however, that the survival of so vulnerable a natural enclave, in terms of its potential for economic exploitation, can hardly give scope to much compromise.

The current master plan offers no visual rendering of what the area might look like in the future," maintains Mr. Jabri. The ideal solution, the conservationists agree, would be to stop the implementation of the plans, to guarantee the continued cultivation of the palm gardens and to turn the area into a sustainable national park.

Lately, the ARA has been going to great lengths to ensure that the owners vacate the land so that demolition of its contents can begin. Letters sent by the ARA to land owners, the last of which was dated March 16, 1996, and was made available to the Jordan Times, warns that the owners must remove all installations within a space of two weeks or else "the authority will regretfully have to remove all buildings and contents." Nothing has been removed yet by either the owners or the ARA.

Meanwhile, conservationists and observers of development plans in Aqaba fear that they are running out of time. Even at this late stage in the costly planning for its transformation, conservationists plead that Al Hafayir merits a reassessment for careful conservation. They say that the palm shore should be kept clean, its continued cultivation encouraged, its palms maintained in thriving condition and its protection ensured by decree, as the quintessence of one of the country's most splendid nature environments.



The lush palm belt on Al Hafayir, shading the Ghandour cafe, may fall prey to construction development (photo courtesy of Nadine Toukan)

King Hussein calls on all parties to work together

(Continued from page 1)

land-for-peace. The peace process has made considerable progress towards a final settlement. It is vitally important to continue this progress, and to build up on our achievements horizontally and vertically. All sides must be committed to what has been agreed, and to what will be agreed. All must continue to work together to build further, to reinforce and raise mutual confidence, and the true determination to complete the edifice of comprehensive and just peace, in which future generations will flourish. Peace must be the optimal strategic choice of everybody.

"As for brotherly Iraq, we wished from the bottom of our heart that circumstances could allow its participation in the summit. We asserted at the summit that we look forward to the day when we see Iraq, having overcome its strife, having rid itself of all the causes of its suffering, and regained its natural place in the Arab environment, enjoying its unity and sovereignty over all its national soil, with its noble people, whom we all cherish, enjoying democracy, freedom, and human rights.

"The Cairo summit was the first on this scale since the Gulf war. Its results were, thank God, positive, and conducive to optimism. It opened the door for many bilateral and trilateral meetings that were marked by clarity and candour. These meetings will continue, God willing, until we reach a stage that embodies Arab solidarity, and that realises Arab complementarity to which all the peoples of this region aspire.

"We in this country have much to be proud of and to safeguard. We have our priorities, and the constants of our national principles from which we shall never deviate. The first of these priorities is to protect our national unity, which is one of the pillars of this country's strength and tenacity. It is also the true embodiment of our faith in the principles and values that we inherited from the Arab Revolt. It represents our commitment to the values of tolerance, brotherhood, and solidarity between all sections of this society, based on the principles that true citizenship starts with faith in this country and commitment to it, regardless of origins, roots, or any other considerations.

"As for our process of democratisation, this blessed tree whose roots are booming anchored deeper in the noble soil of Jordan, to become the example and the yardstick to whoever believes in freedom, human rights, and human dignity. It is one of our principal sources of pride, which we seek to enrich by true participation, that is based on the Constitution, that takes inspiration from the National Charter, and that upholds the law and the higher national interest. It is our duty to stand together, as a solid barrier against anyone who tries to exploit the atmosphere of tolerance that democracy provides, to abuse it, or to infiltrate through it to slander this country or to belittle its sacrifices and achievements.

"We are aware that the progress of country which we have achieved, gives us cause for pride and joy. We also realise that the continued progress of our country, and the resumption of its process of economic and social development, in the post-peace period, requires of us more diligent and sincere work, within the framework of a clear and comprehensive national vision, which identifies our objectives, priorities, methods, and programmes. My faith in our one Jordanian family, in our national institutions, and in our apparatus of state is enormous. It gives me every confidence in the bright future that has begun to dawn."

Jordan condemns Khobar attack

(Continued from page 1)

called Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, the Saudi defence minister, voicing Jordan's condemnation of the carbomb attack which, he said, was directed against Saudi Arabia's stability and security.

Mr. Kabariti said that Saudi Arabia was quite capable of dealing with all acts of terrorism and sabotage attempts against its security.

In reply Prince Sultan expressed his appreciation of Jordan's position.

Speaking in Cairo where he is attending an Arab information ministers' meeting, Information Minister Marwan Munsher said the Jordanian government and people express their deep sorrow over the death and injury caused by "this criminal act."

The minister called for joint action to deal with all acts of terrorism. He met with his Saudi counterpart to express Jordan's stand.

3 Israeli soldiers killed in W. Bank

(Continued from page 1)

It is a breakaway faction from Fateh headed by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Meanwhile, Reuters reported Beirut that a group called the Palestinian National Liberation Organisation, also supposedly led by the same Abu Musa, claimed the attack.

According to Reuters, a statement claiming responsibility said the attack was to "express its rejection of the treacherous peace deals the Palestinian National Authority has signed with Israel"

The statement also noted that all but one of the attackers escaped. No other reports have said that anyone was arrested.

An Israeli army statement said: "At approximately 0800 this morning (Wednesday), three soldiers were shot dead and two more wounded — one moderately, the other lightly — in a clash with terrorists east of Na'aran."

Na'aran is located north of the self-rule territory of Jericho, but still within the West Bank.

Palestinian officials were quick to assert that the site of the attack fell outside of the jurisdiction of the self-rule government, the Palestinian National Authority.

The Israeli statement said the attackers took from the vehicle a selection of weaponry including a machine gun, M16 rifles and a number of Kalashnikovs. According to the statement some weapons and a hand grenade were later found in a field.

Israeli Major General Ouzi Dayan, chief of the central command, expressed satisfaction with Jordan's response to the incident, reports said.

The major-general said that Jordan's participation in trying to capture the militants was as "good as always; they are doing their best to try to stop such incidents, but this morning they failed and the price was very high."

Mr. Netanyahu was quoted by various press agencies as blaming the attack on Syrian-backed militia groups.

19 Americans killed, scores injured in Khobar blast

(Continued from page 1)

we expect our allies" to follow.

Mr. Clinton also said he had no immediate plans to visit Saudi Arabia, but did not rule out a trip at an appropriate time in the future.

He said "the explosion appears to be the work of terrorists," but State Department officials said no group had claimed responsibility for the attack. "The cowards that committed this murderous act must not go unpunished," Mr. Clinton said, adding that an Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) team was dispatched to Saudi Arabia on Wednesday promised "very harsh and very swift" punishment of the bombers.

But Saudi and U.S. officials said they had little idea who carried out the attack, the second in eight months against a U.S. military target in the kingdom

Condemnation of the bombing flowed in from Saudi Arabia's Gulf Arab neighbours and Western allies of the kingdom, whose military programme has meant lucrative contracts in Europe and the United States

The explosion from a parked fuel truck ripped off the entire facade of a residential block and carved out a huge crater outside. Saudi television showed pictures of torn mattresses, mangled televisions and furniture and melted video players lodged among slabs of fallen concrete as bulldozers cleared away mounds of rubble and twisted metal

The Saudi Interior Ministry and the Pentagon put the number of deaths at 19 Americans. The Pentagon said 64 Americans were seriously wounded and the Saudis said a total of 386 people were hurt, including 147 Saudi nationals, 118 Bangladeshis, 109 Americans, four Egyptians, two Jordanians, two Indonesians and two Filipinas.

U.S. Air Force planes left Germany for Saudi Arabia to begin picking up victims. The main U.S. military hospital in Europe was also put on alert, a U.S. Air Force spokesman said

The bomb attack was the worst against U.S. interests in the Middle East since 241 U.S. Marines and sailors were killed in Beirut in 1983.

In Saudi Arabia in November, five Americans and two Indians were killed in a bomb attack on a U.S.-run military training centre in Riyadh

A senior Arab diplomat said of the latest bombing: "The attack was very professionally executed. The method used was different from the Riyadh carbomb but the target is the same. It is too early to speculate who did it." Israeli President Ezer Weizman blamed Iran.

Another Saudi official said: "Saudi Arabia is determined to pursue the criminals, apprehend them and bring them to justice. Those who did it will not go unpunished."

He also said the attack would not affect the kingdom's strong ties with the United States. Riyadh offered a 10 million riyals ($2.67 million) reward for help in securing arrests. Road blocks were set up throughout Saudi Arabia's eastern region.

A Saudi official in Washington promised "very harsh and very swift" punishment for whoever set off the bomb.

Four Saudi nationals were beheaded in Saudi Arabia last month for the Riyadh bombing. The government said they were influenced by Islamic groups outside the kingdom, including dissident Mohammad Al Masaari and financier Osama Bin-Laden.

Mr. Masaari, who is waging a campaign against the Saudi royal family, has denied the charge from his exile in London.

Analysts and diplomats said the blast posed the biggest internal security challenge to the kingdom in nearly two decades, when militants took over Islam's holiest shrine the grand mosque and hundreds of people were killed. "This shows there are deep feelings of anti-Americanism among militants. The fact that they were able to carry out such an operation means there may be more in store," a Saudi analyst said.

Saudi Arabia, like other Gulf Arab states, has been mostly concerned with security threats from Iraq and Iran since Baghdad invaded Kuwait in 1990 and has increasingly looked to its key ally Washington for security assurances.

But homegrown militancy has gained momentum since the Gulf war, when fundamentalists were incensed at the influx of half a million mostly U.S. soldiers on Saudi soil.

"There are pockets of dissent against the Americans and the authorities and the two bombs obviously show that these feelings are growing," said a Western diplomat.

Outrage at the bombing came rapidly from France, Italy, Ireland, Belgium, Germany and Russia and across much of the Arab World. British Prime Minister John Major called it "an act of pure evil."

Squadrons of U.S. F-15s, British-made Tornado jets and training aircraft are stationed at the base, which is also used by members of the Gulf war coalition to enforce United Nations sanctions imposed against Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait. The U.S. embassy said it had received threats and warned of possible attacks after the four, Riyadh bombers were arrested in May.

Christopher to assure Mubarak, Arafat

(Continued from page 1)

for Israel renouncing a commitment to give back Arab territory. "Basically what we heard from the Israelis that the Israelis do want peace negotiations," Mr. Burns said.

Mr. Musa was critical on Tuesday of Netanyahu's remarks at a news conference with Mr. Christopher, saying they confirmed Arab fears for the future of the Middle East peace process.

The usually restrained government newspapers savaged the U.S. Secretary of State for going soft on Mr. Netanyahu. Front-page editorials accused him of blindly supporting Mr. Netanyahu as the new Israeli leader tore away the foundations of five years of Arab-Israeli peace talks. The newspaper Al-Ahram said Mr. Christopher had "changed the entire U.S. policy overnight."

"In the strangest press conference Netanyahu cancels all international agreements... and Christopher supports him," it declared in a banner headline.

The government newspaper Al Akhbar talked of "an organised retreat which seemed to have been forced upon Christopher, who appeared cringing and helpless". After his meeting with Mr. Arafat, Mr. Christopher told reporters that "the new Israeli government understands its obligations under the agreements" it has reached with the Palestinians and other Arabs. "We all must work to implement the agreement reached between Israel and the Palestinians," he said. Mr. Christopher and his party headed for Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, immediately after his session with Mr. Arafat for an impromptu inspection of the scene where a truck bomb killed at least 19 Americans and injured more than 200 more.

Mr. Christopher brought to Cairo a report on his talks with Netanyahu, who declared his willingness to reopen communication with the Palestinian National Authority, but shied away from a promise to deal with Mr. Arafat directly.

G-7 must be ready to intervene in currencies — Camdessus

PARIS (AFP) — International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus said Tuesday the world's leading industrial powers must recognise the need to intervene in currency markets if it is justified.

Two days before the opening of the G-7 meeting in Lyon Thursday, Mr. Camdessus said that based on economic fundamentals, parity between the major currencies "has never been more justified in 30 years."

This situation was due notably to the will of the seven major powers to operate in an orderly reversal of currencies following the plunge in the dollar against the yen and European currencies at the end of 1994.

The seven "should recognise that they did well," Mr. Camdessus said."They should also recognise that it is necessary to resume (intervention) if it is justified, and as far as possible not to wait until the situation becomes extreme."

The IMF chief also called for bank control rules to be standardised in the industrial countries of the G-10.

"The world financial system is in a bad way. There is an extremely urgent need to tighten things up," he said.

Mr. Camdessus also said that the plan to sell part of the fund's gold reserves to finance aid for the world's poorest countries still faced obstacles.

"It's going to be more of a battle," Mr. Camdessus said. The subject will be on the agenda at the G-7 meeting.

He said the IMF needed to be given the means to achieve its plans to finance loans for the world's poorest countries between 2000 and 2004 and to meet the cost of plans to reduce debt.

"But certain countries have sacrosanct principles as soon as we talk about gold. The metal provokes primitive reactions," he said.

The overall debt of the 20 poorest countries is estimated at $97 billion .

Germany, in particular, and Italy and Japan are against the principle of gold sales while Britain, Canada and the United States support the idea. France recently shifted its position and said it was open to consensus.

Worried at being forgotten, world's poor call for G-7 action on debt

APIA (AFP) — Seventy-one of the world's poorest nations, fearing developed countries are rapidly losing interest in them, appealed Tuesday for the upcoming Group of Seven (G-7) summit to take decisive action on Third World debt.

The countries are part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states who have a trade and aid convention with the European Union (EU).

An ACP ministerial meeting opened here Tuesday to plan for a summit of leaders this year and to prepare for the end in 2000 of the convention which has given these poorer nations EU aid and trade preferences in the European market.

ACP President Zephirin Diabre, who is also Burkina Faso's economy and finance minister, told the opening session that the debt burden would be on the agenda of the G-7 summit opening in Lyon on Thursday.

"The debt problem is one of the most serious economic disasters of all time, whose insidious effect has caused greater harm to our economic performance than have the determination of the terms of trade and the oil crisis," Mr. Diabre said.

The African states south of the Sahara alone owe $145 billion and spend $10 billion every year to service it. The ACP group as a whole owes $200 billion .

"Since every dollar spent on debt servicing means another dollar less for education, health and access to good drinking water, it is a matter of extreme urgency to seek a definitive solution to the problem of the indebtedness of the developing countries," Mr. Diabre said.

He called on the G-7 to produce "a new and spectacular initiative".

Mr. Diabre said official development aid to ACP countries had fallen, bringing with it political and social instability and affecting their ability to ensure good governance.

Industrialised countries had a waning interest in Third World aid and seemed to believe that official aid only benefited the rich people of poor countries, he said.

The United Nations target is for industrialised countries to set aside 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for aid to poor countries. The latest figures, however, put the donations at just 0.3 per cent.

"The lesson is quite clear: Our collective survival depends on us and on us alone. In order to survive we need to inspire in the rest of the world a modicum of trust and confidence, without which nothing would be possible."

Mr. Diabre said the ACP-EU relationship had been set up 20 years ago to enable the ACP members to become stronger in world trade, but today "our positions are weakening."

Western Samoan Finance Minister Tuilaepa Sailele told the conference opening that the ACP had "clearly lost some of its strategic and economic advantages" and needed to be prepared to face a less hospitable political and economic climate.

"The ACP group clearly needs to reassert itself despite its relative marginalisation in the past two decades. As a group we still represent a significant part of the globe and we are not entirely without some economic and political influence.

"Harnessed properly, these strengths can provide valuable leverage and firepower to reverse the marginalisation of ACP interests that has so weakened our position in recent years," Mr. Tuilaepa said.

Six Asian cities among 20 most expensive in world for expatriates

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe remain the most expensive cities in the world for expatriates to live in, with three other Asian cities in the top 20 list, according to survey results received here Wednesday.

A study by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), part of the London-based Economist Group, put Hong Kong at 12th place, while Seoul and Singapore were in a four-way tie for 16th position with Frankfurt and the French city of Lyon.

The cities were graded on the basis of a comparative cost-of-living index against New York, which was rated 100 and was the 36th most expensive city.

Tokyo was given an index of 179, while Osaka-Kobe, considered one metropolis because of their proximity, was rated 172. Zurich was a far third with 147, followed closely by Oslo and Geneva. While the three Japanese cities remained the world's most expensive cities for foreigners, "they have become a little cheaper as the yen has weakened against the U.S. dollar," a press statement from the EIU said.

The global survey comparing prices and products in 121 cities is conducted every six months by the EIU as a guide for companies in calculating allowances for executives and their families.

Hong Kong has become more expensive in the past six months, moving from 17th to 12th place, the EIU said. Singapore rose from 23rd place to 16th, joining Seoul, which rose from 20th. Both moved up the ranks as the relative cost of living fell in some European cities over the past six months, the EIU said.

1,000 U.S. businesses urge Congress to increase foreign aid

WASHINGTON(USIS) — Rather than "money down a rathole," as some critics have charged, foreign aid is an "investment.... creating future markets for American goods and services" as well as jobs, according to a report by the Business Alliance for International Economic Development.

The Business Alliance, a coalition of trade associations representing over 1,000 American businesses, released its report, entitled "Foreign Assistance: What's In It For Americans?" at a June 24 press conference.

In the report, the business organisation argues that increasing the level of U.S. foreign assistance to developing nations is "a wise use of taxpayers' money" because it will lead to prosperity at home as well as to prosperity and security abroad.

For proof, it cites the relatively "modest amounts" of U.S. foreign aid during the 1960s, which "helped achieve a massive increase in direct investment in the developing world and an even larger growth in U.S. exports to those countries in the 1980s and 1990s."If there's one thing we know for sure," the report states, "it is that the American economy is growing today mainly because other countries want and can afford to buy our products and services."

The examination of the effectiveness of foreign assistance came as the Senate prepared to debate legislation funding foreign aid for fiscal year 1997. As a federal budget cost-cutting measure, the House of Representatives earlier passed a 1997 foreign assistance bill that cuts $458 million from the previous fiscal year's level.

Statistics recently compiled by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), comparing levels of foreign assistance for 1995, show that the United States followed Japan, Germany, and France in economic and humanitarian aid it gave to the developing world.

For Barry Blechman, foreign policy analyst and primary author of the report, this was a disturbing trend, because "U.S. economic assistance helps developing countries build the kind of physical, human, and institutional infrastructure necessary to spur their economies, to foster trade, and to attract private investment — the very things that make possible American exports and thereby American jobs."

Furthermore, the report points out that "few Americans realise that 80 per cent of the total foreign assistance budget is spent right here in the United States on American goods and services — more than $10,000 million in 1994.This translates to about 200,000 U.S. jobs."

As an example, the study cites Cormier Textile Products, a company in Maine, which "provided tarps for disaster relief and temporary housing in Africa," and a road building project in Mali that used machines made by companies in North Carolina and Minnessota.

World poverty levels a disgrace, says U.N. chief

GENEVA (AFP) — The findings of a U.N. report published here Tuesday provoked the U.N. secretary general, Boutros Ghali, to say that it was "inadmissible" that a fifth of the world still lived in abject poverty.

The U.N. report, commissioned to mark "the international year for the eradication of poverty", found that 1.3 billion people lived on a daily income of less than $1.

"Extreme poverty offends the most basic values of the charter of the United Nations" Dr. Boutros-Ghali said, adding that poverty "also flies in the face of our idea of development". "It is inadmissible that at this point in time, 1.3 billion people are living in absolute poverty," he said.

The report said that 80 per cent of the U.N.'s overall resources were channelled into improving living standards. The U.N. document attempted to put into perspective the scale of the worsening situation by saying that "every minute around fifty babies are born into poverty and every year the number of impoverished increases by 25 million people."

Whereas the gap in income ratio between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest 20 per cent in international terms was 30 to 1 in 1960, this significantly widened by 1991 to 61 to 1, meaning the poor were a lot poorer in real terms than ever before.



"Have you heard about that mad cow disease? If everyone wanted to kill and eat me, I'd go mad too!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

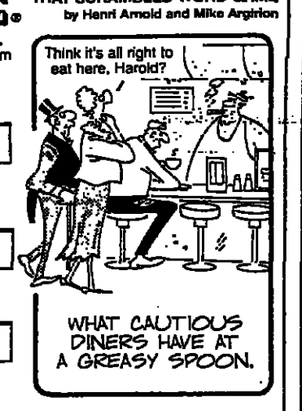
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SENWY

TYRID

VASHIL

ORREBB



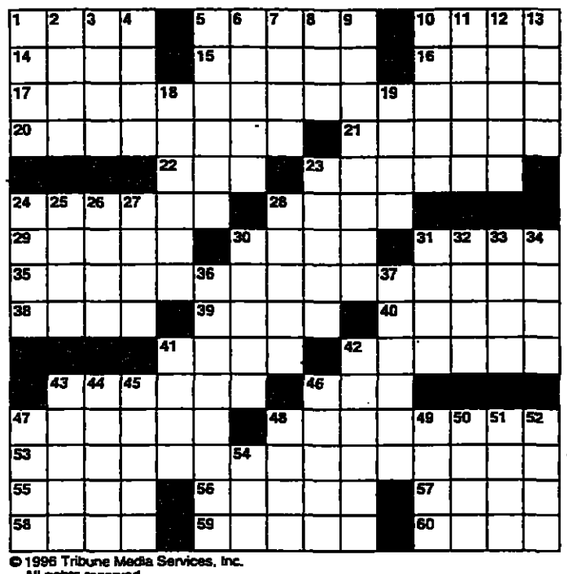
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer :

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TYPED TWINE SCHOOL MASCOT
Answer: What the tenor who hit high "C's" got — LOTS OF "C" NOTES

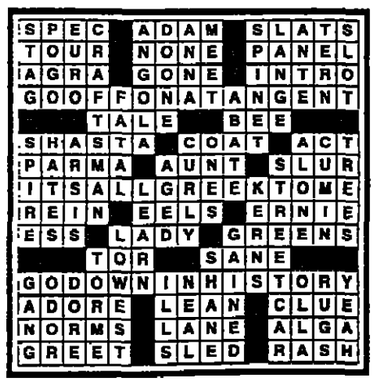
THE Daily Crossword by Richard Thomas



ACROSS
1 Bonkers
5 Bundle maker
10 Safari
14 Laptop operator
15 FL city
16 Olympic site, once
17 Three pins
20 Sad
21 Duke and earl
22 Famous Caesar
23 State of agitation
24 Prove wrong
28 — under (fails)
29 Kind of acid
30 Lushes
31 Live outdoors
35 Three pins
38 Stew
39 NBA coach Tomjanovich
40 Tierney role
41 "Buffalo Bill"
42 Dues payer
43 Some survivors
46 Bulgarian currency unit
47 Wales river
48 Holster contents
53 Four pins
55 Dutch —
56 Gussy up
57 Flying start
58 Ties the knot
59 Hot condiment
60 Coarse file

DOWN
1 Swallow rapidly in large amounts
2 Large part of our planet
3 Man, briefly
4 Keystone curve
5 Cravat kin
6 Caustic
7 Secular
8 Golfer Ernie -
9 Most run-down
10 Fidelity, to Galahad
11 White oak
12 Glowing coal
13 Piano row
18 "Khartoum" star
19 Smithereens
23 Tetched
24 Rabble
25 Kuwaiti prince
26 Can
27 Elementary constituent of a whole
28 Candy treat
30 Moves quickly before a gale
31 Pack in
32 "Three men in —"
33 Bog
34 Seckel
36 Former teens
37 Soccer team
41 Type of business: abbr.
42 Pilgrimage site for Muslims
43 Interlace
44 Covered with climbers
45 Bruce and Laura
46 Prefers
47 Performance
48 Writer Silverstein
49 Lab gel
50 Zeus' mother
51 Planet
52 — by (visit)
54 Mrs., in Madrid

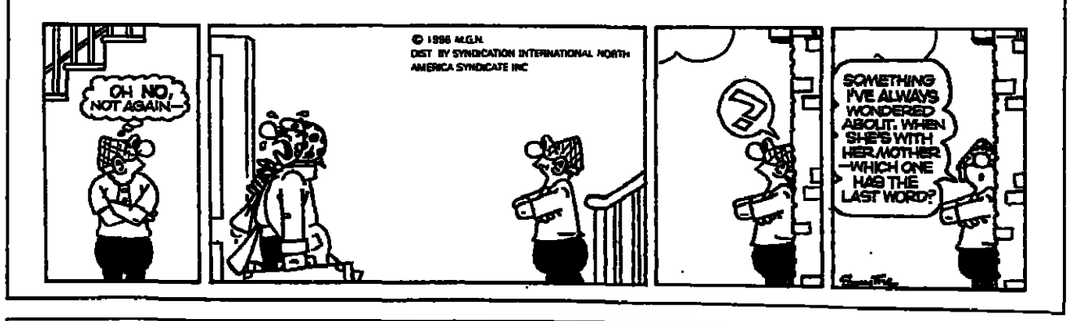
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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, JUNE, 27 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson,Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You may be somewhat confused about worldly affairs today, so be sure to come to a better understanding with your fellow associates on what is required.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Get right at the tasks ahead of you today without fear since you can easily handle them. Be poised and charming around any new people.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You seem to be having difficulty arranging the evening's pleasure but persevere and everything will work out quite satisfactorily.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Be more thoughtful at home with your loved ones and improve conditions there, and do some fine entertaining tonight at your abode.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You find it hard to gain the cooperation of fellow associates today, but do your own tasks and they get the hint and everything will be alright.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study the cost of some pleasure you have in mind of pursuing and decide only on what you can afford and have a fine time.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Handle the duties which can improve your lifestyle. Be more romantic towards your mate in the evening today and you can have harmonious times.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have to use care in going after your personal aims during the daytime today, but they can easily be attained in the evening tonight.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Do nothing carelessly which can spoil your reputation in any manner today, but later tonight is fine for travelling about town.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) Handle your responsibilities wisely today and don't take any chances with your credit. You feel satisfied this evening about a new project.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Plan how to expand in your career at this time and then take initial steps in such direction tonight. Don't be so trusting of a newcomer.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Use much care in trying to gain personal aims during the daytime today and in keeping promises, the evening brings success in both.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JUNE, 28 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a fine day today for being with old and new friends and having a very good time. Your mate is in the mood for a gala time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Home should be the right place to be in today and tonight and to see the next coming few day in happily with your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Drop in here and there to see friends who are not far away and bring the coming next few days in happily and full of fun.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is a good day today to think about adding to your abundance in the next few coming days and to celebrate this period nicely with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Do what you please for the coming next few days and concentrate on greater prosperity in the period ahead for you to be successful.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It might be well to observe the coming next few days at some large function or big hotel and enjoy a gala affair with close friends and have a good time.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Take your rightful place within the social circle to make this a very happy time. See the coming celestial period in happily.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is a good day for making new allies on a new project for the coming next few days and strengthening old relations.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Find new personalities who can be enjoyed in the next few days and see how they fit into your present circle of close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) This is a good day today to please your mate and your close friends, and spread happiness all around. You may spend a lot of money.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can see the previous days out in the company of fellow associates and this can become a memorable period for those who are special to you.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get your home nicely decorated so that you can bring in the next few days in the company of loved ones, fellow associates and close friends.

Birthstone of June: Emerald — Citrine.

HOROSCOPE
FORECAST FOR THURS
JUNE, 27 1996
By Thomas S. Pierson,Astrol
Carroll Righter Foundation

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come with your loved ones
mprove conditions there, as
ome fine entertaining tonig
your abode.

LEO: (July 22 to August 2
ind it hard to gain the coope
of fellow associates today. In
your own tasks and they ge
oint and everything will be it

VIRGO: (August 2
September 22) Study the si
ome pleasure you have in s
of pursuing and decide on
what you can afford and ha
ime time.

LIBRA: (September 2
October 22) Handle the d
which can improve your life
Be more romantic towards
nate in the evening today and
an have harmonious times.

SCORPIO: (October 2
November 21) You have te
are in going after your pers
ims during the daytime toda
hey can easily be attained i
evening tonight.

SAGITTARIUS: (Novembe
o December 21) Do nothing
essly which can spoil your r
ation in any manner toda
ater tonight is fine for trad
bout town.

CAPRICORN: (December
an. 20) Handle your respon
ies wisely today and don't
ity chances with your credi
eel satisfied this evening to
ew project.

AQUARIUS: (January 2
ebruary 19) Plan how to ir
n your career at this time as
ake initial steps in such dir
night. Don't be so trusting
newcomer.

PISCES: (February 20 to
0) Use much care in ma
ain personal aims during th
ime today and in keeping pa
s, the evening brings som
oth.

FORECAST FOR FRI
JUNE, 28 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to Apr
This is a fine day today for
with old and new friends and
ng a very good time. Your ac
n the mood for a gala time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May
Some should be the right pla
e in today and tonight and t
he next coming few days in lo
y with your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June
Drop in here and there to
riends who are not far away
uring the evening next few da
appily and full of fun.

MOON CHILDREN: (June
o July 21) This is a good day
y to think about adding to
bundance in the next few ne
ays and to celebrate this pe
ickly with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 2
What you please for the co
ext few days and concentrate
greater prosperity in the pe
head for you to be successfu

VIRGO: (August 22 to S
ember 22) It might be wi
bserve the coming next few d
some large function or big
nd enjoy a gala affair with c
riends and have a good time

LIBRA: (September 23 to O
ber 22) Take your rightful p
within the social circle to c
his a very happy time. Se
oming celestial period in hap

SCORPIO: (October 23 to N
mber 21) This is a good da
making new allies on a new
ect for the coming next few d
nd strengthening old relatio

SAGITTARIUS: (November
o December 21) Find new
ossibilities who can be enjoy
he next few days and see
hey fit into your present circ
ose friends.

CAPRICORN: (December
an. 20) This is a good day
o please your mate and your
riends, and special happines
round. You may spend a
money.

AQUARIUS: (January 2
ebruary 19) You can see thi
ings clearly out in the compa
ellow associates and the
become a memorable period
hose who are special to us.

PISCES: (February 20 to
0) Get your home nicely dec
nd so that you can bring
ext few days in the compa
oved ones, fellow associate
ose friends.

Birthstone of June: Pearl
Lifeline.

Credit Lyonnais sheds 5,000 jobs

PARIS (AFP) — The Credit Lyonnais bank announced a plan to shed the equivalent of 5,000 jobs against a background of deep difficulties, 11 months after the EU authorised a controversial state rescue.

The CFDT trade union said after a works council meeting that bank President Jean Peyrelevade had told trades unions he intended to reduce the workforce of 35,000 by the equivalent of 5,000 full-time jobs, representing 14.3 per cent, by the end of 1998.

But management thought it might be able to reduce this figure by negotiating reductions in working hours and it wanted to avoid forcing people to take redundancy.

Since 1994, the state-owned bank has cut 1,500 jobs under its first round of measures to recover from losses which brought it to the verge of bankruptcy.

Under the second plan, which is under way now, it is to shed 2,000 jobs. This scheme, which was to have been completed by the end of this month, might be extended until the end of October or November because 170 jobs have yet to be abolished, the union said.

In the middle of June it emerged that the bank was looking for a third package of rescue measures only 11 months after the commission of the European Union (EU) had approved a French state rescue, the third liferaft package, of 45 billion francs ($8.6 billion).

Part of this plan is expected to involve a huge conversion soon of about 40 billion francs of debt into equity under a complicated securisation operation.

But several sources close to negotiations between the bank and the treasury have said recenly that the situation of the bank is alarming and that "against a tight timetable, all paths are being explored" and that "a major operation is being prepared because the situation is more serious than had been thought".

One source said two weeks ago that "a major operation is inevitable but has not yet been defined".

All kinds of solutions have been envisaged, and top executives in French commercial banking have suggested that one obvious element of a package might be privatisation, while noting that the difficulties of the bank and its status as a pillar of national finance, might repel potential buyers and notably foreign banks.

However sources at the finance ministry have sought to play down talk of eventual privatisation.

The bank reported a profit of 13 million francs in 1995 from a loss of 12.1 billion francs in 1994, but the results for the first half of this year are expected to worsen.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 26/06/1996

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
250.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	11.9	1.61	12	460	100250	219.50	217.00	2.50-
4.780	4.180	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	12.4	3.41	8	4750	19635	4.19	4.10	.09-
3.800	3.250	BANK OF JORDAN	11.9	0.00	8	4882	16105	3.36	3.30	.06-
2.700	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV.BK.	4.9	6.57	8	1600	3418	2.15	2.12	.03-
S 8.300	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	11.5	3.21	2	527	2205	4.37	4.30	.07-
1.340	.920	JOR.GULF BANK	5.5	7.61	22	25492	23242	.94	.92	.02-
4.180	3.300	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	17.9	0.00	4	550	2049	3.76	3.72	.04-
S 4.590	1.700	UNION BR.SAV.INV.	15.6	0.00	5	1700	2975	1.76	1.75	.01-
4.000	1.720	THE BUSINESS BK.	8.4	0.00	16	10250	18035	1.78	1.75	.03-
3.850	2.420	BEIT.AL-MAL (SECTRA)	1.7	5.64	3	300	800	2.67	2.66	.01-
+ 1.190	.400	AMMAN BANK INV.	g	0.00	27	64855	17849	.40	.38	.02-
1.790	1.050	PHILADEL.INV.BK.	g	0.00	28	43350	44299	1.05	1.05	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 171.43	%CHG: -1.20	144	140137	251036			
4.800	3.700	ALNISR AL-ARABI -	11.8	4.33	2	1200	5544	4.41	4.62	.21-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 124.79	%CHG: +0.47	2	1200	5544			
+ 1.900	1.490	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	10.2	8.15	68	48050	70729	1.50	1.47	.03-
7.100	6.500	VEHCLS. OWNERS FED.	14.8	6.06	4	846	5584	6.60	6.60	-
6.150	4.650	ARAB INTL.HOTELS	10.5	3.09	2	4500	21650	4.75	4.85	.15+
2.500	1.190	NATL. PORTFOLIO	g	0.00	20	12450	15405	1.27	1.22	.05-
3.660	3.090	ARAB INTL.INV.EDUC.	12.5	6.35	8	3350	10487	3.15	3.15	-
1.500	.980	ZARKA EDUCATION	g	0.00	2	900	900	1.04	1.00	.04-
2.530	1.870	UNIFIED CO.	9.9	5.29	3	650	1226	1.90	1.09	.01
X 1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	X	0.00	8	7260	6581	.95	.90	.05-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.39	%CHG: -0.02	135	77986	132561			
1.260	1.170	ATTAHQEED	g	0.00	2	2500	3125	1.26	1.25	-
+ 3.900	3.270	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.6	3.08	18	6630	21579	3.28	3.25	.03-
5.960	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	16.0	3.79	7	2650	13981	5.30	5.28	.02-
+ 10.580	8.900	JOR. PETROL.REFINERY	9.0	9.04	8	1170	10400	9.05	8.85	.20-
+ 8.150	6.800	JOR.WORSTED MILLS	8.5	3.76	6	1500	10000	6.80	6.65	.15-
5.300	3.360	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	18.5	5.95	41	11650	39334	3.43	3.36	.05-
2.500	2.150	JORDAN DAIRY	13.6	6.82	2	1200	2850	2.20	2.20	-
+ 2.640	1.810	JOR.PIPES MANFCT.	4.7	6.82	1	200	352	1.82	1.76	.05-
+ 3.310	2.750	GENERAL MINING	6.4	12.50	2	500	1250	2.58	2.50	.08-
+ 8.100	4.710	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	12.5	4.40	4	600	2765	4.78	4.55	.23-
6.000	3.180	ARAB ALUM.IND.	5.1	11.83	7	918	3105	3.46	3.38	.08-
.760	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	g	0.00	13	14400	7766	.56	.54	.02-
+ 1.800	1.180	ARAB.PAPER CONV.IND.	7.9	8.85	5	1100	1280	1.10	1.27	.02-
3.500	1.060	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	10	4700	5556	1.26	1.18	.06-
1.780	.930	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	g	0.00	3	2500	958	.99	.94	.05-
2.310	1.080	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	27.1	0.00	42	14027	20557	1.53	1.46	.08-
+ 3.450	2.300	UNIV. MODK.INDS.	6.7	9.05	16	6830	15107	2.30	2.21	.09-
2.250	1.380	JOR.INDS.RESOURCES	17.6	0.00	28	11500	16103	1.45	1.40	.04-
1.990	1.000	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	29.3	0.00	18	8400	9139	1.17	1.08	.04-
3.460	1.780	EL -EZZ READY WEAR	P	0.00	1	200	376	1.98	1.88	.10-
1.560	1.180	INTL. TOBACCO	27.8	0.00	18	5000	5931	1.21	1.18	.03-
2.520	1.180	UNION CH. & VEG.	30.1	0.00	3	1400	1728	1.26	1.22	.04-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 108.41	%CHG: -1.03	262	101218	196505			
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 139.88	%CHG: -1.03	523	320541	389646			

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 26/06/1996

+ .830	.680	JOR.TRADE FAC.	17.9	0.00	13	13250	9918	.68	.67	.01-
N 1.480	1.050	ZARA FOR INVESTMENT	28.7	0.00	2	500	718	1.40	1.45	.05+
VN 1.000	.740	UNION INV. 50%	69.8	0.00	10	7450	7711	.74	.73	.01-
1.340	.630	ARAB FIN.INVEST.	g	0.00	18	11550	7407	.67	.64	.03-
.650	.340	JOR.INDS.MATCH-JEMCO	g	0.00	4	1300	692	.55	.53	.02-
1.920	1.380	NATL. CHLORINE	E	0.00	11	4248	6285	1.50	1.49	.01-
.790	.520	ARAB INTL.INV.TRD.	g	0.00	2	1000	575	.60	.57	.03-
+ 1.160	.590	NATL. TEXTILE	g	0.00	3	2500	1450	.59	.58	.01-
N 1.100	.700	NATL.MULT.ENG.NAMICO	E	0.00	33	18900	13255	.72	.70	.02-
1.130	.800	JORDAN STEEL	E	0.00	25	12350	10134	.83	.82	.01-
1.020	.630	MIDEAST PHARM. 75%	E	0.00	5	4050	1620	.66	.65	.01
1.880	1.200	UNION TOBACCO 75%	E	0.00	5	3650	3337	1.20	1.19	.01-
N 1.030	.680	RAZI PHARM. 65%	E	0.00	1	500	346	.69	.68	.01-
VN .970	.660	INDS. ENG.	33.3	0.00	6	3900	2792	.55	.54	.01-
VN 1.520	.960	INDS. CERAMIC	E	0.00	7	5136	4242	.86	.84	.02-
VN 1.050	.470	I.TEXTILE MANUF.	g	0.00	7	3000	1353	.47	.45	.02-
N .970	.660	NATL. POULTRY 75%	E	0.00	1	500	220	.69	.69	-
N 1.500	.610	MID.EAST COMPLEX	7.3	0.00	10	9750	5980	.62	.62	-
GRAND TOTAL					142	102836	89921			

+ : New 12 months low
S : Stock dividend during the past 12 months
N : Listed during the past 12 months
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more
g : Negative P/E
E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

Jordanians highlight investment opportunities to British businessmen

LONDON (Petra) — On the sidelines of the first Jordan-week expo in London, Jordanian and British businessmen held a seminar Wednesday on investment opportunities in Jordan and other related issues.

British Businessmen Association President Richard Peumont said that the Jordanian-week in Britain strengthens cooperation agreements and trade exchange between the two countries.

Mr. Peumont added: "This gives us the opportunity to further discuss investment opportunities and the new investment promotion law".

Trade and Industry Minister Ali Abul Ragheb said that the ministry is studying a plan for improving the performance of the Jordanian economy to adapt to the new world economic changes.

Mr. Abul Rahgeb said Jordan sought for a long time to develop its economy along the reform and reconsruction programmes designed by the World Bank and the International Monetray Fund which aim at reducing government expenditure and supporting the industrial as well as the agricultural sectors and increasing the earnings from Jordanian exports.

He stressed that Jordan's new promotion law encourages the flow of foreign capital to the Kingdom

Jordan's Ambassador to Britain, Fuad Ayyoub, described Jordanian-British ties as strong and noted that such an expo activates a tangible cooperation between the two countries and builds confidence between them."

Amman Chamber of Commerce President Khaldoun Abu Hassan briefed the businessmen on investment opportunities in the Kingdom and the suitable climate the Jordanian government is offering to investors.

Arab shipyard to invest $87m in expansion

MANAMA (AFP) — The second biggest shipyard in the Middle East is planning to invest around $87 million to expand its facilities to handle increasing business, its director said in press remarks.

The Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (ASRY) will spend the funds on purchasing more cranes, building new wharfs and expanding existing facilities, its chief executive, Mohammad Al Khatib, said.

"The first phase of this development project will be launched next year," Mr. Khatib told the Bahraini daily Al Ayyam.

ASRY, the second biggest regional shipyard in the region after the Dubai drydocks in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has invested large funds in expansion projects over the past few years to face growing demand.

In 1995, it repaired and maintained 119 vessels and made net profits of around $1.5 million in the first four months of 1996, Mr. Khatib said, adding the figure is higher than the earnings in the whole of 1995.

He said ASRY's turnover would likely reach $79 million this year, higher than the $76 million forecast in its budget.

ASRY is an affiliate of the Kuwaiti-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), which groups Saudi Arabia, the top oil power in the world, with nine other key Arab oil producers.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

$1.00 costs	1.3604/14	Canadian dollar
	1.5286/96	German marks
	1.7138/48	Dutch guilders
	1.2592/02	Swiss francs
	31.44/48	Belgian francs
	5.1707/57	French francs
	1534.0/5.5	Italian lire
	109.53/63	Japanese Yen
	6.6110/10	Swedish crowns
	6.5260/10	Norwegian crowns
	5.8880/30	Danish crowns
	1.4115/25	Singapore dollars
	0.7905/10	Australian dollars
	7.7380/30	Hong Kong dollars
One sterling	$1.5398/08	
Gold (ounce)	$383.40/383.90	

DAILY BUSINESS BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Reduction of customs duties blamed for Attanqeeb Company loss in '95

** THE REDUCTION of customs duties on marble and granite imports by 70 per cent was blamed for the JD188,368 loss at the Attanqeeb Construction Material Manufacturing Company last year compared to the JD72,773 profit that the company posted in 1994. Board Chairman Othman Bdeir told the general assembly that the reduction in customs duties has resulted in large stocks of finished and semi-finished products valued at about JD1 million. As such, he said, the company was forced to lower prices by the same percentage to continue operations noting that the company imported some quantities at the new reduced prices.

"It was more suitable to endure a loss for one time and to try to compensate that loss over the next years than keep the prices at a high level and consequently be left out of the market," Mr. Bdeir explained.

According to the annual report, production of marble and tiles declined due to the drop in demand and the recession in the construction sector. This decline was offset by higher production of granite as a result of putting new equipment into operation in the second half of 1995. However, the chairman indicated that since the tiles and marble plants did not operate at full capacity, the cost per unit has increased. Moreover, the reduction in customs duties on granite imports from 150 per cent to 50 per cent has negatively affected the local granite manufacturing industry and its profitability due to the change in the rates taken in the economic feasibility study for the granite project.

As a result of the changes in the fundamentals that existed in the past years in terms of customs duties and competition, Mr. Bdeir said that the company conducted studies on neighbouring markets, especially Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and is currently considering the possibilty of production changes to suit the needs of those markets (Al Ra'i).

Energy expert begins visit to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — M. Mehrdad, a multi-award winning and world figure in electrical energy conservation and power conditioning, will be conducting various seminars on electrical energy, including one to be held today at the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA).

Dr. Mehrdad, of Electroflow Technologies Inc. (ETI), is the inventor of the unique electroflow system that offers full power conditioning and energy saving to factories, institutions and commercial buildings.

Jordan has been the first country in the Arab World to obtain this technology and install the first system at the Philadelphia Hotel, attaining a noticeable power improvement and a reduction in the energy bill through raising the efficiency of the network.

Shortly after his arrival in Amman Monday, Dr. Mehrdad met with Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Saeed Arafeh for talks on joint cooperation. During the course of his visit, to last until July 3, he is also scheduled to meet with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas and other officials.

Dr. Mehrdad's visit aims first of all to solidify relations between Jordan and ETI and to help the Kingdom in developing innovative devices that are unique in the world and that will ultimately contribute towards the country's exports, as well as future reassurance of the country's financial independence, a press release received by the Jordan Times said.

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Closing Date 25/6/96	Tokyo Closing Date 26/6/96
Sterling Pound*	1.5404	1.5453**
Deutsche Mark	1.5285	1.5305
Swiss Franc	1.2600	1.2591**
French Franc	5.1785	5.1785**
Japanese Yen	108.95	109.35
European Currency Unit	1.2390	1.2400**

* USD Per STG
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Precious Metals — Date: 26/6/1996

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	383.90	7.80	Silver	5.17	0.100

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin — Date: 26/6/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0897	1.0951
Deutsche Mark	0.4627	0.4650
Swiss Franc	0.5618	0.5646
French Franc	0.1385	0.1378
Japanese Yen*	0.6467	0.6499
Dutch Guilder	0.4128	0.8149
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira*	0.0460	0.0462
Belgian Franc	******	*****

* Per 100

JORDAN MARKETPLACE

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Heat to keep distance records safe in Atlanta

ATLANTA (R) — The record books for endurance and tournament events will be safe at next month's Olympic Games because of Georgia's muggy heat, a sports medicine expert said on Tuesday.

"In the cold you run for time, in the heat for a place," said Phil Sparling, of Georgia Institute of Technology's exercise research laboratory.

"You won't be seeing records broken in events lasting longer than 15 to 20 minutes. It's not going to affect the sprint events, it's going to affect the endurance and tournament events," Sparling told a seminar on the effects of the heat on the centennial Olympics in Atlanta.

The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) staged the seminar as a result of fears that the heat and humidity will pose a dangerous threat to athletes and spectators.

But officials said they were confident the extensive measures they were planning, including shade tents at venues and misters and sprayers for spectators and athletes, would keep dangers to a minimum.

The city is working with the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and a host of other organisations to ensure that water stations and shade tents will never be far away for the throngs expected to descend on Atlanta.

The average high temperature in Atlanta during the Olympic period of July 19 to August 4 is 91 degrees (33C), said Lans Rothsfusz of the national weather service's Olympic bureau.

But last year the average high was 97 degrees (36C) during the Olympic time slot, and the mercury hit 100-plus (more than 40C) on several consecutive days.

Joe Wilson, the marathon medical officer, said his team would take treatment to the runners rather than waiting for them to come to medical stations during the gruelling road race of 26 miles and 385 yards (42.195 km).

The men's race has been moved from late on August 4, immediately before the closing ceremony, to early in the morning of the same day to ease the heat stress on runners.

"In Barcelona, one third did not finish the men's race," said Wilson. "We would expect a large number to need medical assistance or evaluation through the race (in Atlanta)."

But he said Atlanta had no plans to spray the asphalt course, as the evaporating water would create a humid micro-climate which would tax the runners.

Wilson said that at last week's U.S. track and field Olympic trials at Atlanta's Olympic stadium, 283 spectators were treated, 20 per cent of them for heat-related illness.

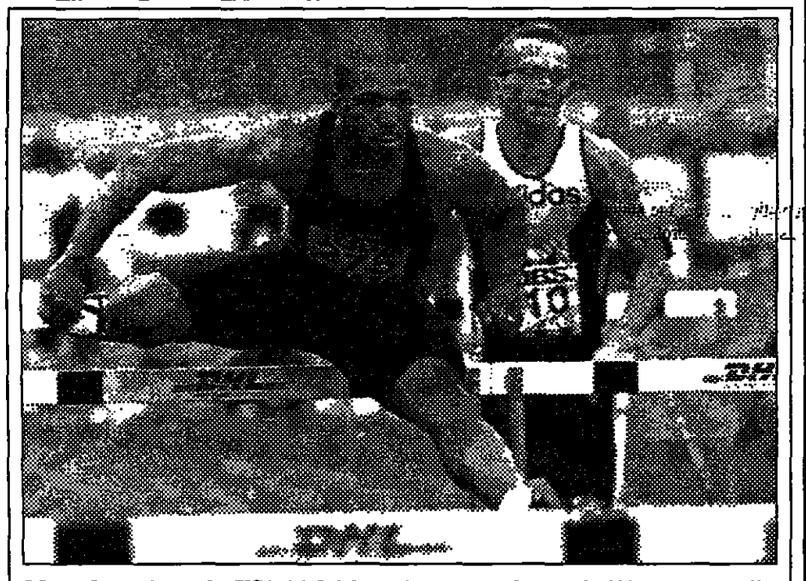
Of the 163 athletes treated at the trials, 38 per cent were heat-linked and 27 had to receive intravenous infusions.

Veterinarian Kent Allen said up to $1 million and four years of research had gone into the project to keep horses cool and happy during the equestrian events at Georgia International Horse Park at Conyers, east of Atlanta.

"We think we have done a tremendous amount of work to watch the only athletes in the Games who cannot say 'stop'. But we do not intend to let these athletes run until exhaustion," he said.

Officials said Olympic spectators should wear loose-fitting and light-coloured clothes and drink plenty of water to protect themselves against the heat.

Patrick Meehan, Georgia's director of public health, told the seminar that 25 per cent of those treated for heat-related illness at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics were media workers and journalists, many of whom are forced to spend long periods of time in the sun.



Mark Crear from the USA (right) in action to win the men's 110 metres hurdle race ahead of Paul Gray from Great Britain and Franck Asselman from Belgium during the international athletics meeting in Lucerne, June 25. Crear won in a time of 13,40 seconds (Reuters photo)

FINA reinstates Foschi's 2-year ban

COLORADO SPRINGS (AFP) — Jessica Foschi, who tested positive for steroids 10 months ago but was allowed to swim for a United States Olympic berth, was on monday banned from competition for two years.

FINA, the world governing body for swimming, imposed the ban after an investigation into the circumstances of what became an ongoing saga that swirled for months around the 15-year-old distance specialist.

Foschi's ban will be backdated to begin in August of 1995, when she tested positive for steroids at the U.S. Championships in Pasadena, California.

After sitting out of the Pan Pacific Championships, Foschi made a tearful appeal to a three-member U.S. swimming disciplinary panel, saying she had no idea how the steroids entered her system and that she might have been the target of sabotage.

Her plea prompted the panel to vote 2-1 to impose only a two-year probation on Foschi rather than the two-year ban FINA rules mandated. This pushed U.S. swimming officials to convene an appeal board and instead impose the two-year ban.

The leniency with Foschi was a particular embarassment to U.S. officials, who rebuked Chinese swimmers for positive drug tests, going so far as to ban them from competing in the Pan Pacific meet at the Atlanta Olympic pool.

But U.S. swimming officials had a change of heart when Australia's Samantha Riley tested positive for a banned substance and was granted only probation by FINA. Riley's coach took the blame for the positive test.

U.S. swimming reinstated the probation and avoided a court fight with Foschi, allowing her to swim last March at the U.S. Olympic swim trials. She failed in a bid to qualify for Atlanta in three different events.

Kemp might join U.S. Olympic team

COLORADO SPRINGS (R) — Milwaukee Bucks forward Glenn Robinson has withdrawn from the U.S. Olympic men's basketball team due to an injury, USA Basketball announced Tuesday.

Robinson, who averaged 20.2 points and 6.2 rebounds in playing all 82 games for the Bucks last season, pulled out of the U.S. national team suffering from tendinitis of the right Achilles tendon, USA Basketball President C.M. Newton said in a news release.

The selection committee is expected to name a replacement for Robinson on the squad being billed as Dream Team III later this week.

Many basketball insiders had questioned the selection of Robinson as one of the original 10 players named to the squad in favour of a number of more prominent, and arguably more deserving, athletes.

His withdrawal opens the door for Seattle All-Star forward Shawn Kemp, who many felt had been snubbed by being left off the squad. Kemp had been considered a strong candidate for the Olympic team after leading the Sonics to a 64-win season — second best in the league — and a berth in the NBA championship series.

Kemp was passed over a second time when forward Charles Barkley of the Phoenix Suns and guard Mitch Richmond of the Sacramento Kings were named as the final two members to the 1996 Olympic team in April.

Another strong candidate to replace Robinson could be Kemp's teammate Gary Payton, the Seattle guard who was named the 1995-96 NBA Defensive Player of the Year.

The other NBA stars originally named to the team are centres Shaquille O'Neal, Hakeem Olajuwon and David Robinson, forwards Karl Malone, Scottie Pippen and Grant Hill, and guards Penny Hardaway, Reggie Miller and John Stockton.

David Robinson, Malone, Pippen and Stockton played for the original 1992 Dream Team at the Barcelona Games.

Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan, a member of Olympic gold medal teams in 1984 and 1992, kept himself out of the running, opting to spend the summer on the golf course.

Fredericks close to 100 metres world record

HELSINKI (R) — Namibia's Frankie Fredericks ran the fastest 100 metres of the year and just failed to match the world record at an international athletics event Tuesday.

Fredericks clocked 9.87 seconds, just 0.02 seconds outside American Leroy Burrell's world record of 9.85 set in Lausanne nearly two years ago.

Britain's triple jump world record holder Jonathan Edwards, athlete of the year in 1995, jumped a season's best of 17.82 metres to comfortably win his event and revive his Atlanta Olympic chances after a disappointing start to the season.

Fredericks was helped in his magnificent run by a following wind of 1.9 metres per second, but the time was legal.

"It's the best I've run and obviously I'm tremendously happy," he told reporters. "It was cold, but I reacted well. I ran a good race. Now I know what I'm capable of running."

He beat Briton Darren Braithwaite who clocked 10.13 with Canadian world champion Donovan Bailey third on 10.15.

Fredericks, quickly away and never headed, came home about five metres clear of Braithwaite with Bailey just behind.

The winning time was 0.05 seconds faster than the 9.92 of Trinidad's Ato Boldon and American Dennis Mitchell set earlier this month and, until Tuesday, the season's best legal marks.

Edwards's mark was some way short of his world record of 18.29 set at last year's world championships, but the record-holder was clearly pleased.

"I'm getting there," he told reporters. "I'm very happy with the jump — the timing and rhythm are not quite there yet, but there was a bit of spark in it which there hasn't been up until now."

Edwards had taken three weeks off competition to rest heel and knee niggles, but said he now felt in good shape. "This was always going to be a test for what shape I was in, and all things considered, it was a very good performance."

Edwards only completed three jumps, but the second round leap was enough to pull him out of reach of Norway's Sigurd Njerve, second with 17.01 metres.

Elsewhere, world record holder Fernanda Ribeiro of Portugal clocked the fourth fastest time of the season to win a hard-fought women's 5,000 metres in 14 minutes 52.66 seconds, ahead of Finland's Annemari Sandell.

German javelin thrower Boris Henry also improved his personal season's best, winning his event with a throw of 86.48 metres — the sixth best this year. And Britain's Kelly Holmes won the women's 800 metres in a fast one minute, 58.53 seconds.

Indians beat Red Sox; Tigers overcome A's

Giants, Cards lose in National League

BOSTON (R) — Orel Hershiser and Paul Shuey combined on a seven-hitter, and Eddie Murray and Manny Ramirez hit back-to-back homers as the Cleveland Indians beat the Boston Red Sox 4-0 Tuesday.

Hershiser (8-4) gave up five hits with one walk and two strikeouts through seven innings as the Indians defeated the Red Sox for the 11th time this season.

"You don't expect to come into fenway and throw seven zeroes on the board," Hershiser added. "I think the wind in from left field helped me tonight, it knocked some balls down."

In Chicago, Kevin Tapani allowed two runs in eight innings and Frank Thomas had a run-scoring single to snap a tie in the fifth inning as the Chicago White Sox edged the California Angels 3-2, giving them a split in their season series.

With one out in the fifth, California starter Mark Langston (5-3) walked Tony Phillips and Darren Lewis before Thomas singled to centre to score Phillips for a 2-1 lead. Lyle Mouton's sacrifice fly plated Lewis to give Chicago a 3-1 advantage.

In Kansas City, Greg Vaughn hit his 22nd home run to extend his hitting streak to 11 games and Ricky Bones allowed three runs over 5-2/3 innings to lift the Milwaukee Brewers past the Kansas City Royals 5-3.

Bones (6-8) gave up just two earned runs and seven hits, walking one and striking out one.

Kansas City has lost nine of its last 13 games.

In Minnesota, Dave Hollins hit a two-run homer, Greg Myers drove in two runs and Frank Rodriguez won for the fourth time in his last five starts to lead the Minnesota Twins to a 6-1 victory over the New York Yankees in the opener of a doubleheader.

Minnesota, which has won three in a row at home, struck first in the second as Marty Cordova walked and Hollins blasted his 10th homer one out later off Brian Boehringer (0-2) to open the scoring.

The Twins tacked on two more runs an inning on a bases loaded sacrifice fly and a single.

In the second game, Bernie Williams, who homered in the first game, homered and drove in three runs as the New York Yankees claimed a doubleheader split with a 6-2 victory over the Minnesota Twins.

Williams stroked his 13th homer of the season to give the Yankees a 3-2 lead and finished with three hits for his 19th multi-hit game of the season. Alomar's season high.

At Texas, Ivan Rodriguez homered twice and Kevin Gross allowed six hits over 8-1/3 innings as the Western division-leading Texas Rangers defeated the Baltimore Orioles 5-2 to snap a two-game losing streak.

In Toronto, Jacob Brumfield's two-run homer with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning lifted the Toronto Blue Jays past the Seattle Mariners 8-7.

Norm Charlton (2-2) struck out pinch-hitter Juan Samuel to start the ninth, but walked Tomas Perez. Brumfield then hit the first pitch he saw over the left-field fence for his seventh homer of the season.

"It was a fastball, up and away. Nine out of 10 times, that one doesn't go out of the park. It's not supposed to happen to me," Charlton said.

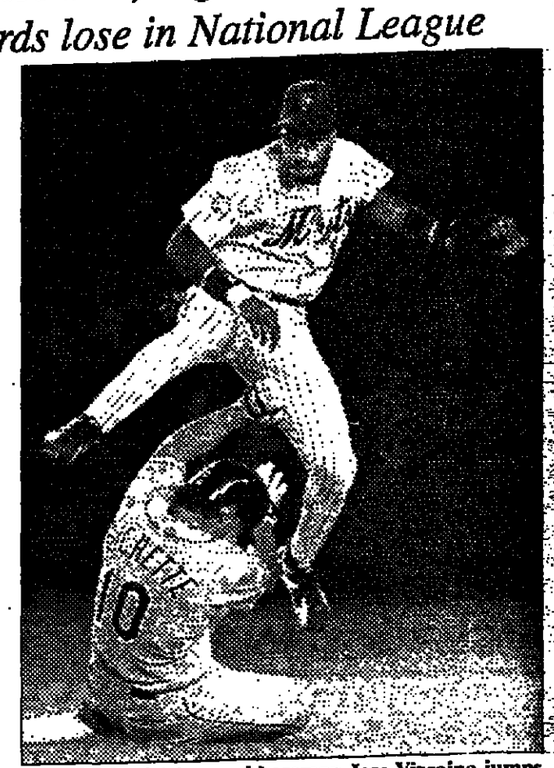
In Oakland, Bobby Higginson doubled twice, homered and drove in five runs, and Omar Olivares survived seven rocky innings to lift the Detroit Tigers to their fourth win in five games, a 10-8 triumph over the Oakland Athletics.

Higginson, who is 11-for-22 in his last six games, sandwiched a pair of two-run doubles around his 11th homer, which came in the fifth inning.

Oakland's Mark McGwire, hit a pair of homers, the 300th and 301st of his career. McGwire, who has hit 64 homers in his last 162 games, became the 70th player in baseball history to hit 300 or more homers.

"It was a fastball over the plate and I hit it," McGwire said of his 300th. "I didn't think it was out when I hit it, but it was nice. It's something that no one can ever take away. It will probably hit me when I am retired. I am proud of it after what I have been through in my career."

Detroit's Allan Trammell recorded his 1,000 career RBI on an infield single in the second inning.



New York Mets' second baseman Jose Vizcaino jumps high in the air to avoid Colorado Rockies base runner Dante Bichette (10) after turning the double play during action in the sixth inning at New York's Shea Stadium (Reuters photo)

Cubs blank Dodgers

Steve Trachsel outdueled Hideo Nomo in tossing a six-hitter for his second shutout of the season as the Chicago Cubs blanked the Los Angeles Dodgers 2-0 Tuesday.

Trachsel (6-4), who had two of Chicago's six hits, walked one and struck out five. He has allowed just five earned runs and 16 hits in his last four starts, a span of 31-1/3 innings. Trachsel's era of 2.15 is second to Florida's Kevin Brown (1.88) in the National League.

In Atlanta, Jason Schmidt allowed one run in five innings to snap a three-game losing streak and Marquis Grissom and Chipper Jones homered as the Atlanta Braves edged the St. Louis Cardinals 4-3.

Schmidt (3-3) scattered three hits and two walks with five strikeouts.

The Braves built a 4-0 lead thanks to a leadoff home run by Grissom, his ninth, in the first and three runs in the fourth inning.

In Cincinnati, the Reds beat the Philadelphia Phillies twice, 3-1 and 9-1.

In the first game, Dave Burba allowed one run in 6-1/3 innings and Eric Davis added a three-run double as the Cincinnati Reds romped to a 9-1 victory.

Burba allowed four hits and three walks, striking out seven in improving to 5-1 in his career against the Phillies.

Bret Boone hit a two-run homer in the first inning, and Davis, had a three-run double in the second inning.

In the second game, Kevin Jarvis allowed one unearned run over 6 1/3 innings and Eric Owens snapped a fifth-inning tie with a sacrifice fly to lead the way to the 3-1 victory.

Jarvis (2-1), making his sixth start of the season, gave up six hits, walked two and struck out four.

The Reds have won four straight and seven of nine, and the Phillies have lost 10 of their last 12 games.

At Florida, Charles Johnson singled in Jeff Conine with one out in the bottom of the 10th inning as the Florida Marlins banded the San Francisco Giants their season-high fifth straight loss 5-4.

Gary Sheffield opened the Florida 10th with a walk against Rod Beck (0-3), but was erased at second on Conine's fielder's choice. Terry Pendleton followed with a double down the right-field line, putting runners on second and third. After Kurt Abbott was intentionally walked, Johnson hit a 1-1 pitch up the middle and under the glove of diving shortstop Rich Aurilia, easily scoring Conine with the winning run.

In Montreal, Darrin Fletcher went 4-for-4 and highlighted a five-run first inning with a two-run double as the Montreal Expos beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 8-2.

Fletcher's double scored Henry Rodriguez and Moises Alou to give the Expos a 4-0 lead. He added a solo homer in the sixth and an RBI double in the seventh.

In New York, Colorado right fielder Dante Bichette's misplay of Todd Hundley's pop up in the third inning allowed Jose Vizcaino to score and lifted the New York Mets to their fourth win in their last five games, a 3-2 defeat of the Colorado Rockies.

In San Diego, Sean Berry capped a five-run eighth inning with his second grand slam of the season and Derek Bell hit a two-run homer in the sixth to power the Houston Astros to a 9-4 victory over the San Diego Padres.

The Padres battled back from a 4-1 deficit to tie with three runs in the seventh, but the Astros scored five times in the eighth for a 9-4 lead.

East-West vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A 4
♡ K J 6 2
◇ K Q 9 8 5
♣ A K

WEST
♠ Q 9 8 3 2
♡ A 10 8
◇ A J 10
♣ 8 2

EAST
♠ 10 7 6 5
♡ Q 5 3
◇ 7 6
♣ 9 7 6 3

SOUTH
♠ K J
♡ 9 7 4
◇ 4 3 2
♣ Q J 10 5 4

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1◇	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♠

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

WHAT'S THE HURRY?

We have always stressed that aces were made to capture kings. To this we must now add a rider: "...unless, by so doing, you hand declarer the contract!"

With 20 points in high cards and stoppers in every suit, North's raise to three no trump was automatic since South's response denied a four-card major. Had South's jack been in diamonds rather than spades, nine tricks were there for the taking and overtricks would be in the offing.

West led a spade and, since the king of spades was the only entry to the closed hand, declarer took dummy's ace. The ace and king of clubs were cashed, and declarer now had seven running tricks. To ensure an eighth, the king of diamonds was led from the table. West briskly took the ace and returned a spade to remove declarer's remaining stopper.

Declarer cashed three more club tricks. On the first two West discarded hearts but, to preserve the red-suit stoppers, West had to part with a spade on the last. When South now led a heart, West could win with the ace and take two spades, but then was obliged to exit with the jack of diamonds, and dummy's suit winners took the last two tricks — making three-odd.

West can defeat the contract by holding up the ace of diamonds once. That gives declarer eight tricks, but when the clubs are cashed West can discard two hearts and the jack of diamonds. West will be able to win any return, then cash three spade tricks and the other red ace for a one-trick set. Try it.

TODAY AT

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John Travolta and Gene Hackman in
Get Shorty
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CINEMA PLAZA TEL: 692736
Eddie Murphy in
The Distinguished Gentleman
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA CONCORD TEL: 677420
CONCORD "1"
*Abu Al Dahab
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10.30
CONCORD "2"
* The Bridges of Madison County
Shows: 3:30, 8:15
*NELL
Shows: 6:15, 10:30

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Starring comedians:
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Arab Human Rights
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Seles, Enqvist eliminated; Huber, Fernandez advance at Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON (AP) — The carnage of men's seeds continued at Wimbledon Wednesday, with No. 9 Thomas Enqvist ousted in the second round by Malivai Washington.

The 20th-ranked American, playing some of his best grass-court tennis, beat Enqvist 6-4, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 to reach the third round for the first time in seven appearances at Wimbledon.

It was the second straight early Grand Slam exit for Enqvist, a Swede ranked ninth in the world. He lost in the first round of the French Open to Richey Reneberg.

"He hits such big shots," said Washington, who finished the match with an ace. "I was just hoping he wasn't going to get on a roll and start a big comeback."

But Enqvist undermined his own chances by serving 14 double faults.

"On grass the key is to serve well," he said. "I played all right from the baseline but my serve was terrible."

Enqvist's elimination means only four of top 10 seeds remain. No. 3 Andre Agassi, No. 5 Yevgeny Kafelnikov, No. 6 Michael Chang and No. 8 Jim Courier all lost in the first round, while No. 7 Thomas Muster withdrew before the tournament with an injury.

Two other U.S. players joined Washington in the third round Wednesday, both at the expense of fellow Americans.

Todd Martin, the 13th seed, beat Jim Grabb in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4, 7-6 (7-5). And Doug Flach, the 281st-ranked qualifier who stunned Agassi in the first round, continued his run with a 2-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 win over Jared Palmer.

"After beating Andre, I felt as much pressure to play well today to show that it wasn't a fluke," Flach said.

In women's play, fifth-seeded Anke Huber routed Pam Shriver 6-2, 6-1 on Centre Court. It may have been the last Wimbledon singles match for the 33-year-old Shriver, a wild card entry playing here for the 17th time.

Ninth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez moved into the third round with a 6-4, 6-4 triumph over France's Sandrine Testud.

The national euphoria over England's run to the Euro '96 soccer semifinals seems to have spilled over to Britain's tennis players at Wimbledon.

For the first time in 20 years, seven British men made it to the second round. Leading the charge was Tim Henman, who upset French Open champion Kafelnikov in five sets.

Other Brits in the second round were Greg Rusedski, Danny Sapsford, Mark Petchey, Luke Milligan, Chris Wilkinson and Colin Beecher.

"It's very positive," the 62nd-ranked Henman said after his 7-5 (8-6), 6-3, 6-7 (7-2), 4-6, 7-5 victory. "I think everyone is delighted for one another, and let's hope that it can continue. At the moment things are very positive on the sports side of things in this country."

Virtually all the Brits said they drew inspiration from the success of the England soccer team, which was paired against Germany in the Euro '96 semifinals Wednesday night at Wembley.

"Maybe it's the football that's doing it to us, who knows?" said Rusedski, who served 30 aces in a straight-sets win over Daniel Nestor.

Rusedski, who was born and raised in Canada, changed his nationality to British last year.

"Watching all the other British lads together was absolutely wonderful," he said. "It's just so much more positive right now. The players want to do well, and they want to prove who is the best British player. I don't think we've had this many British men into the second round in quite a while, if I'm correct."

In fact, the last time was in 1976. The only other time in the Open era was in 1968. But there's no reason to get carried away yet. While England has a decent chance of winning the soccer tournament, no one really expects a British player to triumph at Wimbledon.

The last Brit to win the men's title at Wimbledon was Fred Perry in 1936. The last British player to advance past the round of 16 was Roger Taylor, who reached the semifinals in 1973.



Britain's Tim Henman celebrates his victory over Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov in their first round match at Wimbledon (Reuters photo)

Seles' dream turns into nightmare

LONDON (AFP) — The Wimbledon dream of Monica Seles turned into a nightmare on the number-one show court here Wednesday when she was beaten 5-7, 7-5, 4-6 in 2hrs 20 mins by 23-year-old Katarina Studenikova of Slovakia in the second-round of the women's singles.

The second-seeded Seles, playing at the championships for the first time in four years and bidding to win the only major title missing from her collection, finally surrendered after a short break in play in the final set when she was leading 3-2 with her service to follow.

The match was stopped because of moisture on the court, and although Seles managed to save two break points to lead 4-2, she dropped her serve to let Studenikova back into the match at 4-4.

It was a bitter disappointment for the 22-year-old Seles who had arrived at the All England Club fresh from triumphing at Eastbourne.

She had been seeded to play defending champion Steffi Graf in the final and looked to be well on her way when she took a 4-2 and 5-4 lead in the first set. But then she suddenly went off the boil.

Constantly overhitting and making uncharacteristic unforced errors, Seles became trapped into long rallies with Studenikova using a piercing backhand slice, similar to Graf's, to remarkable effect.

After dropping the first set Seles had to fight hard to get back on level terms but she could never intimidate an opponent who who had failed to get past the first round in three previous visits and who is currently ranked a modest 59th.

Seles, clearly short of match fitness after a season decimated by a persistent shoulder injury after her triumph at the Australian Open, admitted: "I had my chances but I didn't take them.

"The shoulder didn't make a difference today. It was just that she played better than me. Maybe I'm not thinking as sharp as I used to. I should have won that first set tons of times."

Seles, who returned to the tour last year after a 27-month break following her on-court stabbing in Hamburg, went on: "Her sliced backhand gave me problems and my consistency just wasn't there today.

"I don't think it was lack of match practice. She just played smarter than me today. You have good and bad days. You've just got to learn from what goes wrong."

Studenikova, wearing a broad smile after her victory said: "I wanted to win today and so I wasn't afraid of her.

"The break in the final set today helped me a lot. I was tired and disappointed just before we went off. I was thinking in the dressing-room and said to myself 'come on, you can win this match.'"

Studenikova now plays Dominique Van Roost of Belgium who earlier humiliated Yone Kamio of Japan 6-0, 6-0.

Time again for the Tour de France, the greatest race of them all

PARIS (AFP) — It is time once again for the Tour de France — and it is testament to its longevity that no other cycling race comes close to rivalling its status.

Only the greatest cyclists of their generation have won it, and you can be sure that while some riders forsake either the Tour of Italy or the Tour of Spain none would dare miss the Tour de France.

Like any great event, its history is littered with heartbreak, memorable moments and tragedy.

If you talk of heartbreak then Laurent Fignon of France would come close to the top of those who have experienced it — and worst of all in the almost colosseum-like atmosphere of the Champs Elysee.

Fignon, not best loved by his home crowd — despite being a dual winner — after he mocked France's five-time winner Bernard Hinault in 1984, led American Greg Lemond by 58 seconds going in to the final day's time trial.

Lemond then rode one of the greatest time-trials ever and beat a floundering fignon by eight seconds in the closest finish in the great race's history.

A memorable day for Lemond — a disaster for Fignon, and perhaps a wry smile from Hinault.

Ireland's Stephen Roche, only the second cyclist to win the tours of Italy, France and the world championship in the same year, produced one of the most memorable and brave stage performances in 1987.

Entering the Alpine stages second overall, he trailed the Spaniard Pedro Delgado by a huge margin on the climb up to Villard de Llans.

With an almost superhuman effort, Roche counter-attacked on his own and reduced the gap to four seconds by the finish. He took over the yellow jersey, although he spent the night in hospital for his consummate bravery.

Tragedy has struck, in the real sense of the word, three times in the tour's history. Spaniard Francisco Cepeda died in 1935 from a broken skull suffered in a fall down a ravine.

Tommy Simpson, the first Englishman to wear the overall leader's yellow jersey, collapsed and died on Mont Ventoux in the 1967 tour.

Simpson's autopsy revealed a large amount of stimulants in his system, and led directly to the banning of many of them from cycling. Simpson had almost met with similar disaster in the 1965 tour when a horrific fall had led to doctors debating whether to remove his arm or not.

Last year, Italian Olympic champion Fabio Casartelli, who had found life in the professional ranks difficult, was killed when he hit his head against a stone block during a mass pile up on the descent from portet aspet.

His death, though, highlighted the respect and good sportsmanship that have forever been part of the peloton. During the next stage all the remaining riders rode together and at the end parted like the Red Sea to let Casartelli's Motorola teammates ride to the finish together.

Aside from these moments of great emotion, there have been the four giants who have won 20 tours between them, and one threatens to erase all the records by winning his sixth this year.

With respect to Frenchman Louison Bobet, who won three in a row from 1953, the names of Frenchman Jacques Anquetil ('57 and '61-64), Eddie Mercx of Belgium ('69-72 and '74), France's Bernard Hinault (78-79, 81-82 and 85) and Spaniard Miguel Indurain (91-95) will always dominate tour lore.

Anquetil and Indurain are relatively similar, in that both were great time-trial-lists, strong enough climbers and were impossible to break. Also, they both never won the world road race championship, something that caused Anquetil great heartbreak, although Indurain, of course, can still accomplish that.

Hinault, known as the 'badger', was weak in all out sprints but had the benefit of a very strong team, something which Indurain has generally lacked. Like Mercx, he finished runner-up in his final attempt to win a sixth tour, although he was wearing the yellow jersey when he was forced to retire in the 1980 tour.

Mercx has the edge on them all. He enjoyed 35 stage victories, seven more than Hinault, spent a record 96 days wearing the yellow jersey and in 1969 he pulled off the unique achievement of winning all three major Tour de France titles.



Germany's Stefan Kuntz (centre) celebrates after scoring his first goal against England in the 1996 European Soccer semiffnals at Wembley Stadium June 26. Germany faces the Czech Republic in the final on Sunday (Reuters photo)

Germany win penalty shootout to make Euro 96 final

LONDON (AFP) — Germany beat England 6-5 in a penalty shootout after their Euro 96 semifinal finished 1-1 here Wednesday.

Gareth Southgate missed the crucial sudden-death penalty after both sides hit five out of five. Andreas Moller, who is suspended for the final, converted the final kick.

Germany now face Czech Republic in Sunday evening's final also at Wembley.

Alan Shearer put England in front after three minutes only for Stefan Kuntz to hit the equalizer 13 minutes later.

England coach Terry Venables said afterwards about his players:

"I think they can be very proud of themselves. I would like to thank the supporters on behalf of the players.

"It's a shame not to go to the final. We have done our very best. I think our performance in the second half was excellent and we had the chances to finish it off in extra time but it was not to be.

"We know they are physical and they started pulling us about a bit but we started doing that to them and we had our chances."

Czechs continue glory run

MANCHESTER (R) — The Czech Republic continued their fairytale progress at Euro 96 on Wednesday by reaching Sunday's final via a penalty shoot-out victory over favourites France at Old Trafford.

After a dismal, goalless 120 minutes and five successful penalties apiece, the stalemate was finally broken when French substitute Reynald Pedros saw his attempt blocked by Czech goalkeeper Petr Kouba's legs. None of the Czech team seemed keen to take the ultimate responsibility but defender Miroslav Kadlec finally emerged from the huddle in the centre circle to beat French goalkeeper Bernard Lama and clinch a 6-5 victory margin.

It was no more than the battling Czechs deserved against a disappointing French side, who themselves reached the last four only by virtue of a shoot-out success over the Netherlands.

With four players suspended and all three substitutes employed, the Czechs were beginning to run short of potential scorers and contusion reigned when Kubik, who had already taken a kick, walked up to the spot for a second time.

Fortunately for his side, the officials noticed and man-of-the-match Kadlec kept his nerve when it mattered, reviving memories of Czechoslovakia's victory over Germany from the spot in the 1976 European Championship final.

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Iraq blames U.S. for delay in applying oil-for-food deal

BAGHDAD (R) — The United States is impeding the immediate implementation of the oil-for-food deal Iraq has signed with the U.N. last May, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said in an interview made available on Wednesday.

Mr. Aziz, speaking to the Swedish network Formula Broadcast Ltd in Baghdad on Monday, said the issue of selling Iraqi oil and purchasing badly-needed food and medicine for Iraqis suffering under six years of U.N. trade sanctions had not been solved yet.

"We are still facing problems in the committee of sanctions ...the Americans are putting a lot of difficulties in the course of the implementation (of the pact)," Mr. Aziz said.

Iraq and the United Nations reached an agreement on May 20, permitting Baghdad to sell $2 billion worth of oil every six months to raise money to buy humanitarian goods to its people.

The sanctions were imposed on Baghdad after it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

The Security Council's sanctions committee, which consists of representatives of the 15 members of the council, has to complete regulations on how Iraq will sell the oil and buy the humanitarian goods.

"The American suggestions...concerning the selling of oil and the purchasing of goods are rather complicated," Mr. Aziz said.

Iraqi envoy Abdul Amir Al Anbari is expected to go to the U.N. on Thursday to deliver Iraq's food distribution plan.

The plan, according to diplomats, includes how supplies would be distributed to Iraq's kurdish rebels. These proposals are to be in accordance with those given to Iraq by the U.N., which is in charge of delivering goods to the Kurds.

Mr. Aziz also blamed the United States and its Arab allies for not inviting Iraq to attend a two-day Arab summit in Cairo last Saturday.

"They did not invite us. It was a very negative approach. They were under American pressure on one hand and under Kuwaiti and Saudi pressure on the other," Mr. Aziz said in the first official Iraqi reaction to the summit.

"These parties forced a number of Arab leaders not to invite Iraq. But we did not comment on that...we are not concerned or interested in the subject of this extraordinary meeting. It is not a regular summit," he said.

Fourteen heads of state and representatives of seven other Arab countries took part in the Cairo meeting — the first such summit since the 1990-91 Gulf crisis divided the Arab World.

Iraq was not invited.

The summit was called in response to the election in Israel of hardline Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, who has questioned trading land for peace, the basis of previous peace negotiations between Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states.

Mr. Aziz said the summit, contrary to its declared aim, has failed to come out with a "united Arab front or a united Arab position", which he said would weaken the Palestinians and the Syrians in their negotiations with Israel.

Ekeus to visit Turkey

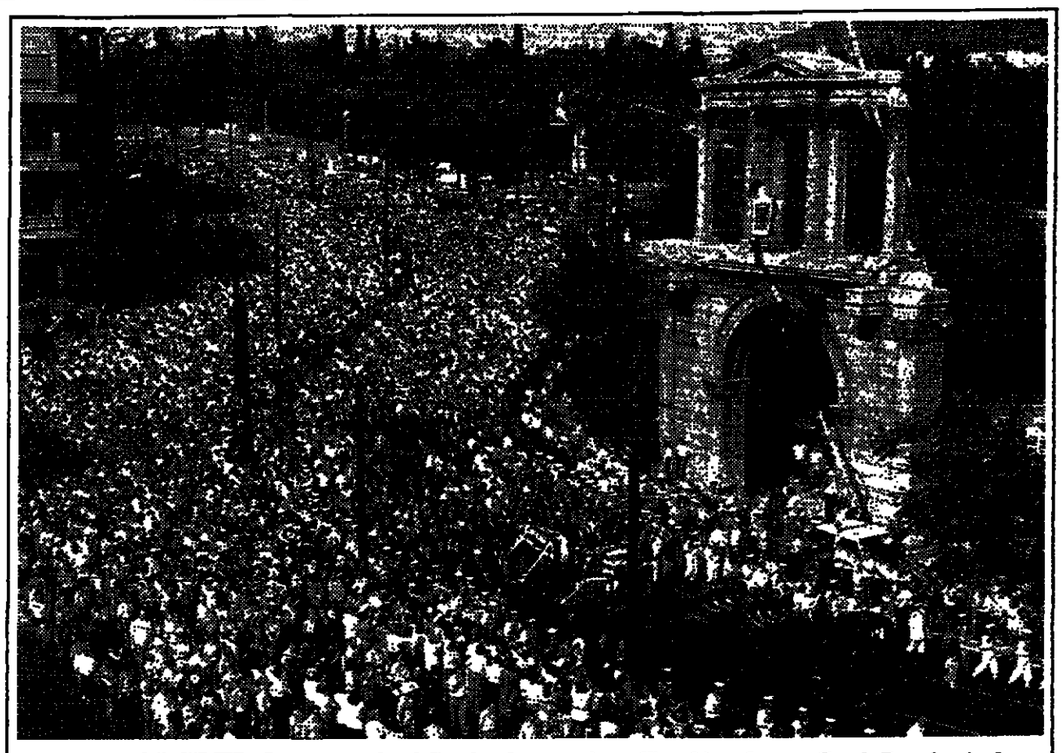
Senior U.N. weapons expert ekeus will visit Turkey later this week to discuss plans for Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

"Ekeus is expected to come towards the weekend and he will brief us about his studies," spokesman Omer Akbel told a news briefing.

Mr. Ekeus said on Monday he believed Iraq was still concealing banned arms, components and documents concerning its weapons programmes.

Despite an agreement he reached in Baghdad on Saturday for unconditional access for U.N. weapons teams to sites they wished to inspect, "on substance nothing has happened," he said.

"Iraq is still, according to our analysis, concealing some important components and weapons and also concealing important documents explaining their programme," he said.



PAPANDREOU FUNERAL: Thousands of Greeks cheer as the coffin of late former Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou, loaded onto an army gun-carriage, passes through a central Athens street and the ancient "Gate of Adrianos" on Wednesday after a funeral service (Reuters photo)

Egypt tells Israel it has right to own missiles

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt said Wednesday it had the right to possess modern weapons, after Israel demanded explanations for its reported purchase of Scud missiles from North Korea.

"The possession of missiles and modern weapons is a legitimate right of Egypt's to strengthen its defence capabilities and defend the gains of peace," Egypt's ambassador to Israel, Mohammad Bassiuni, told the government daily Al Ahram.

He said he was "surprised by the Israeli reaction to this affair while the Jewish state possesses weapons of mass destruction and refuses to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)."

The Washington Times newspaper, quoting a report from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, reported Friday that North Korea had supplied Egypt with seven shipments of parts for Scud C missiles in March and April.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy called on Cairo to respond to the report Tuesday.

"Egypt must provide answers on this affair, which took place behind the back of the United States despite the fact that Cairo receives almost as much military and civilian aid from Washington as Israel," Mr. Levy said in a radio interview.

Mr. Levy was believed to have raised the issue in talks Tuesday with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who visited Israel before flying to Cairo Wednesday to meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The U.S. State Department said Friday it was taking the report seriously but had not decided whether to apply sanctions against Egypt, the second biggest recipient of U.S. aid after Israel.

If confirmed, the shipments would be in violation of a 1990 antiproliferation law and could lead to the imposition of U.S. economic sanctions. Israeli military experts said the Scud C has a range of 500 kilometres, enough to reach Israel.

"It is obvious that these surface-to-surface missiles will not be used against Libya or Sudan, but against Israel if the situation deteriorates," military commentator Zeev Shiff said. Egypt has spearheaded an Arab campaign to pressure Israel to join the NPT.

Israel has never confirmed or denied reports it has 200 nuclear warheads.

Israeli President Ezer Weizman said on Wednesday he was worried by the growing "anti-Israeli" sentiment of Egypt.

Mr. Weizman said he had asked U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to remind Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo on Wednesday that Israel and Egypt were friends.

"I pointed to the behaviour adopted by Egypt, that it has become a leader in anti-Israelism in a worrying way," Mr. Weizman told reporters of his breakfast meeting with Mr. Christopher.

"I told him he should tell President mubarak that we are friends since 1977, almost 20 years," said Mr. Weizman, who as a cabinet minister in Prime Minister Menachem Begin's cabinet helped negotiate the landmark treaty signed in 1979.

Palestinian rights activist released from jail

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) freed leading human rights activist Iyad Sarraj on Wednesday but stopped short of calling off a legal onslaught that appears aimed at silencing him.

Dr. Sarraj, who heads the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens Rights, was released at 2:00 a.m. (2300 GMT Tuesday) after being in prison for 16 days, said his lawyer Raji Sourani.

"He just informed me he was released and I do not know the circumstances," Mr. Sourani said. "Concerning the case (against him) we still have no idea."

Palestinian Attorney-General Khaled Al Kidra confirmed the release but said Mr. Sarraj might still be placed on trial for allegedly assaulting a policeman during his detention.

"The charges were not dropped," he said. "We did not decide yet if there is enough evidence to try him or not. We are studying if there is enough evidence."

"We have the right to release him until his trial," Mr. Kidra said.

Dr. Sarraj was said by friends to be sleeping at home. One described him as "feeling better than he was" in custody.

The PNA initially charged Dr. Sarraj with possession of hashish, but a civilian court ordered him released on bail for lack of proper evidence.

However, Dr. Sarraj, 53, remained in prison to face new charges of assaulting a policeman. They were initially slated to be heard before a military court known for rapid-fire verdicts and closed door sessions.

But Dr. Sarraj said that in fact he had been the one who had been beaten up by the policeman.

Fayez Abu Rahmeh, a leading Gaza Strip lawyer with ties to PNA President Yasser Arafat, said last week that he did not place much stock in the charges against Dr. Sarraj.

Egypt says it thwarted 'terrorists' during summit

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt foiled a "terrorist plot" by the militant group Gamaa Islamiyah aimed at causing havoc during the Arab summit here, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday.

"A terrorist plot organised by a group of 61 militants from the Gamaa Islamiyah (Islamic group) has been thwarted by the state security services," the ministry said in a statement.

"The head of the group, Hossameddin Abdul Fattah, was arrested with five accomplices as he prepared to hold up a jewellery shop in Giza on Friday, June 21, during Friday prayers," it added.

The hold-up of the jewellers' was to mark the start of a series of attacks timed to coincide with the arrivals of Arab heads of state attending the two-day summit in Cairo.

Police arrested other members of the ring in simultaneous raids in Cairo, Giza and the northern Nile Delta region just before the attacks were planned to take place, the ministry said.

The Gamaa militants planned to carry out attacks against "vital installations, senior government and security officials and the media," during the summit on Saturday and Sunday.

An Interior Ministry source said they also planned to attack policemen guarding banks and Bureaux de Change in order to seize their weapons.

According to the ministry statement, Hossam Abdul Fattah is an ex-teacher and a close associate of Talaat Yassine Hammam, the head of the Gamaa's armed wing shot dead by police in April 1994.

He had been wanted since 1990 for his involvement in religious unrest in Giza of that year, the attempted murder of a policeman in 1992 and attacks on video stores in 1993.

Also among those arrested were the group's bombmaker, the Interior Ministry said. Hussein Mahmoud Khedr trained other Gamaa militants to make firebombs and remote-controlled bombs.

"He transformed his office and home into a bomb factory," the statement said. "Electronic circuits, timing devices and remote control devices were found at his home." Police seized 120 kilogrammes of TNT explosives, guns, bombs and ammunition were seized from other militants' homes, along with Gamaa publications and falsified number parts.

Karadzic offers resignation but sets terms

PALE (Agencies) — Bosnian Serb "president" Radovan Karadzic has agreed to resign if international mediators meet controversial conditions, the independent Belgrade newsletter VIP reported on Wednesday.

It said Mr. Karadzic, under mounting pressure as an indicted U.N. war criminal, would quit if the world guaranteed "respect for a minimum of statehood for the Bosnian Serb Republic" and left the disputed northern town of Brcko in Serb hands.

VIP's correspondent in Pale, the Bosnian Serb government seat outside Sarajevo, said Mr. Karadzic wrote to the international high representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt, and the Yugoslav government to inform them of his terms.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic threw Pale authorities into turmoil on Tuesday when he demanded Mr. Karadzic's immediate replacement to ward off the threat of renewed U.N. economic sanctions.

An angry meeting of the Bosnian Serb parliament to decide whether to obey or defy Belgrade lasted until the early hours of Wednesday and was due to resume later.

John Kornblum, the top U.S. official for the Balkans, insisted Mr. Karadzic to step down.

Mr. Kornblum, speaking after a meeting with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, told reporters: "It is the position of the United States and all the other signatories of the Dayton agreement that Radovan Karadzic should leave office and should not have any influence on the events in Republika Srpska" — the Serb entity in Bosnia.

The U.S. assistant secretary of state-designate for European and Canadian affairs refused to discuss reports that Mr. Karadzic was considering resigning, saying he did not have any official reports on the situation.

Mr. Kornblum said he had told Mr. Tudjman the peace process in Bosnia was at a "decisive point" the day after a date of Sept. 14 was set for elections.

"We have done as we set out to do, we have put in place all of the foundations for moving towards elections and establishing a government in Bosnia-Herzeogvina that represents all the country," he said.

Now "it will be important to make more progress in establishing the (Muslim-Croat) federation as a self-sustaining entity (and) it will be very important to make sure that the Republika Srpska (the Serb entity) implements Dayton fully and openly," he said.

Mr. Kornblum was later to fly on to Belgrade for a meeting with President Milosevic before heading for Lyon, France, for a meeting of the Group of Seven most industrialised nations.

The international community insists on Mr. Karadzic's resignation under the Bosnian peace agreement signed by Mr. Milosevic in Dayton.

Bosnian Serbs regard Brcko, a port town on the Sava River that links their eastern and western territories, as vital to their security. It was mainly populated by Muslims and Croats before the war and its future is supposed to be decided by arbitration.

Mr. Karadzic's reference to Bosnian Serb statehood was vague but would cause difficulties if it implied sovereignty for the Bosnian Serb republic.

The peace agreement recognises the Serb half of Bosnia but only as an entity within the country's recognised international borders and not as an independent state as the Serbs constantly try to assert.

Normal relations with Israel not easy for Arab countries

CAIRO (R) - Even if Israel meets its half of the bargain by returning occupied land to Arab neighbours, it will be hard for Arab governments to persuade reluctant Arab citizens to deliver on peaceful relations.

Normalisation, the term for practical matters such as trade, easy travel, diplomatic recognition, academic exchanges and individual contacts, was the unspoken but ever present word at last weekend's Arab summit in Cairo.

Summit host Egypt, which became the first Arab country to sign peace with Israel in 1979 but whose citizens still remain wary of the Jewish state, knows only too well the gap that can exist between official ties and much "colder" popular ones.

Egyptians rarely visit Israel, professional unions forbid their members to deal with it and opposition parties repeatedly urge the government to suspend the peace treaty.

Organisers of the annual Cairo Book Fair and International Film Festival refuse to invite Israel and opposition newspapers survive on a staple diet of Israeli conspiracy theories.

Whenever Israel complains about its cold peace with Egypt, Egyptian officials, with an eye on subversive militants who have a rabid anti-Israel attitude, usually blame the anatagonism on Israel's attitude towards other Arab countries.

Eleven Jordanian political parties and professional associations have criticised the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and have vowed to block normalisation by preventing contact between their members and Israel.

"Normalisation is a public matter. Economic and cultural relations are part of the public domain and not a political matter," said one Arab analyst.

"You can see how the Arab street reacts to the new Israeli government policy statement, with its no, no, no," he said.

He was referring to new Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's election platform, which rejects a future Palestinian state, advocates more Jewish settlements on occupied land and opposes returning to Syria the strategic Golan Heights, which Israel occupied in the 1967 war.

Mr. Netanyahu's questioning of the land-for-peace principle underlying the last five years of Middle East peace talks spurred leaders and representatives of 21 countries to hold their first summit in six years in Cairo.

Rifa'at Al Said, secretary-general of the leftist Egyptian opposition party Tagammu, said it would be difficult for Arabs to overcome their psychological resistance to relations with Israel unless it forged comprehensive peace with its neighbours, and that even then it would take time.

"Normalisation means to have a normal situation and I don't think there's a normal situation between Israel and the Arabs. Israel insists on occupying Arab land and it insists on ignoring Palestinian national rights," Mr. Said told Reuters.

"There's an unequal relationship between Arabs and Israel. Equality means peace. Ordinary Egyptians are wary of normalisation because they didn't find real or comprehensive peace. Once Israel returns all Arab land, we should fight for normalisation but I think it will take some time," he added.

Although Egypt and Jordan, as the only two Arab states at peace with Israel, favoured a softer line on normalisation at the Arab summit, the meeting delivered unusually strong language on relations with the Jewish state.

The leaders warned that if Israel fails to implement peace agreements or deviates from the principles behind the last five years of peace talks, particularly the concept of land-for-peace, Arab states will reconsider the concessions they have already made to Israel in the peace negotiations.

Although Arab states have generally kept Israel at arm's length until it returns occupied land, some softened their stance after Jordan forged its treaty and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a deal giving Palestinians limited self-rule in the Gaza strip and the West Bank.

Qatar and Oman went so far as to establish trade links with Israel and to host Israeli prime ministers.

In October 1995, Israel and U.S. Enron Corporation signed a letter of intent to supply Israel with 2.5 million tonnes of Qatari liquefied natural gas for 25 years from the year 2001.

But since Mr. Netanyahu's victory over the dovish Shimon Peres, Qatar has said it would consider slowing down the pace of normalising ties with Israel.

COLUMN 8

Italian birthrate continues decline

ROME (R) — Catholic Italy's birthrate, one of the lowest in the world, is continuing to decline with government statistics released Wednesday showing deaths outnumbering births in 1995 for the third straight year. Zero growth in Italy was first registered in 1993 and the birthrate continued its downward spiral in 1994. The Italian Institute of Statistics said the trend was confirmed in 1995 when there were 555,203 deaths compared to 526,064 births. Population experts say Italian couples are having fewer children because of financial constraints and because birth control is cheap, readily available and widely practised despite Roman Catholic Church teaching against it. Pope John Paul has waged an unflagging, but largely unsuccessful, campaign against the use of contraception. The trend away from Italy's traditional family-oriented society has alarmed the government and local authorities, which worry about dwindling tax revenues and increased burden on an already over-stretched pensions system. But the Statistics Institute said that due to an influx of immigrants, Italy's population grew 55,000 in 1995 to 57,333,000 people.

'Cuddly dozen' give new hope to panda survival

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese scientists in Sichuan province have successfully bred twelve giant pandas though artificial insemination, Xinhua News Agency reported Wednesday. "The cuddly dozen" have been born since 1991 in the China Research Institute for Panda Protection from parents who live in captivity and find it difficult to mate, a researcher told the official news agency. Located in the native panda habitat of Wolong Nature Reserve, the centre was set up jointly by the Chinese government and the World Wildlife Fund in 1980. China's remaining 1,000 giant pandas live in mountainous areas of Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi.

Teenage solo sailor crosses Equator

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Australian teenage sailor David Dicks has crossed the Equator and is making excellent progress in his bid to become the youngest person to circumnavigate the globe solo, non-stop. Dicks, 17, from Perth, Western Australia, crossed the Equator Monday, he told his mother, Patricia Dicks, in a radio message relayed to her from the Atlantic Ocean Tuesday. The lone mariner told her he had made up so much time in recent weeks he was now back on schedule. At one stage he was about a week behind after bad weather and a damaged mast se-verely limited his progress in his 10-metre (33-foot) sloop, seaflight. Dicks repaired the mast with a specially made bolt dropped to him by the British Navy a month ago when he passed the Falkland Islands, in the South Atlantic. Shortly before that, he became the youngest sailor to negotiate the treacherous Cape Horn, at the southern tip of South America, alone. Dicks left Fremantle on Feb. 26. His latest position is about 250 nautical miles (442 kilometres) east of northern Brazil at latitude 0 degrees, longitude 30 degrees west. According to latest estimates he will reach the half-way point of his voyage — Bermuda in the North Atlantic — at the end of next month. He is scheduled to be back in Fremantle late October, shortly after his 18th birthday on October 6.